

# The Democrats

SPECIAL  
CONVENTION  
ISSUE

# TIME

## WHAT OBAMA KNOWS NOW

By Michael  
Scherer

### JOE BIDEN: THE ART OF OVERDOING IT

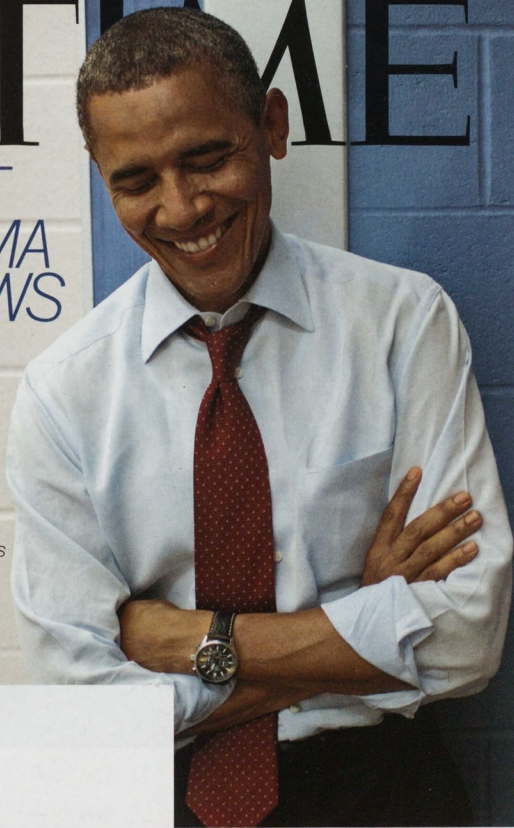
By David Von Drehle

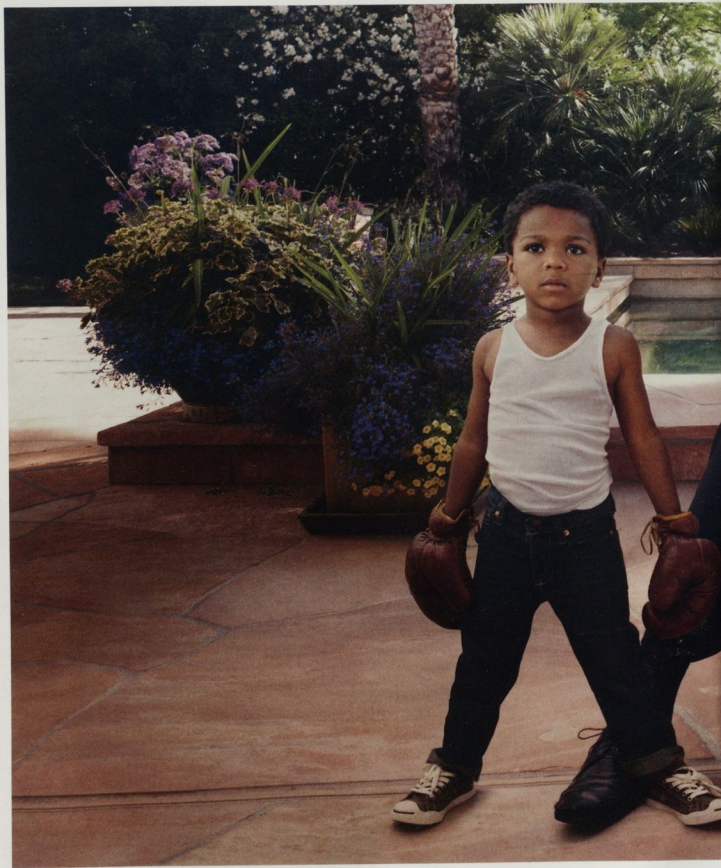
### WHY CHANGE WON'T SELL

By Michael Grunwald

*Behind the scenes  
with the President*

*Photos by Callie Shell*





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Muhammad Ali and a rising star. Phoenix, Arizona.





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LOUIS VUITTON

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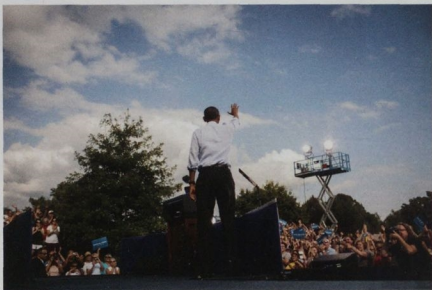
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President Obama addresses a rally at the Rochester Commons in Rochester, N.H.

Photograph by Callie Shell for TIME

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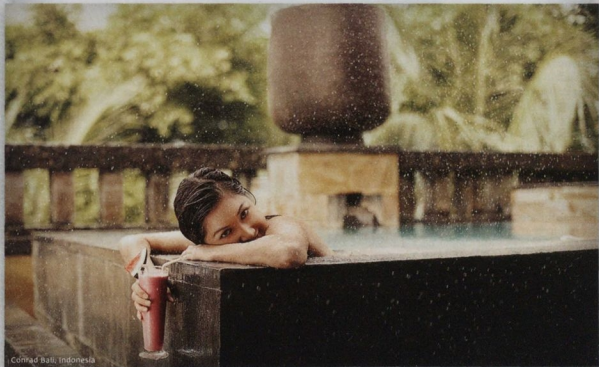
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# Editor's Desk

TIME stories that elicited the most mail



## In Search of a New Mandate



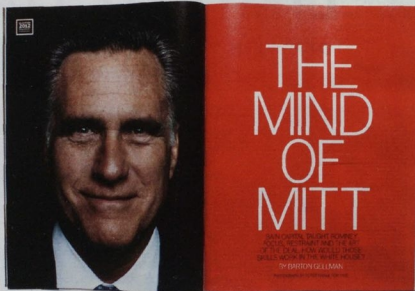
FOUR YEARS AGO, BARACK Obama was called the new Great Communicator, the heir to Ronald Reagan in oratorical talent, though not ideology. One theme running through this special Democratic Convention issue is that Obama has not been all that adept at telling his story as Commander in Chief. Some might call that modesty, but humility is not always a virtue in a President. And when you're running for re-election, you need to be able to explain to voters what you've achieved.

But as you'll see from White House correspondent Michael Scherer's revealing cover story, the President knows this. Obama is more hardheaded and less idealistic than he was four years ago. He's hopeful, but his hope is chastened a bit. He likes to say that facts will win the day, but these days, people brandish their own facts. Obama is frustrated by this. "The President sees this election as a chance to finally tell the story he has struggled to tell," says Scherer. "He wants a new mandate from the voters."

Four years ago, our campaign coverage featured great behind-the-scenes pictures of Obama by Callie Shell. This week's magazine once again has Shell following Obama on the campaign trail, and you'll glimpse a side of the President that we haven't seen in a while. And as you follow the Democratic Convention in Charlotte, make sure you check out our TIME/CNN convention app, Floor Pass, which you can download at [time.com/floorpass](http://time.com/floorpass).

*Pick*

Richard Stengel, MANAGING EDITOR



### THE CONVERSATION

## 'It's like the hedgehog vs. the fox,'

MSNBC's **Joe Scarborough** commented in a discussion of *"The Mind of Mitt."* The Sept. 3 cover story by **Barton Gellman** explains that Romney's wide-ranging experience as a consultant is, in some ways, better suited to the presidency than that of a CEO who focuses on one business. Our special convention issue included excerpts from an interview with Romney in which he refused to give specifics about his budget to avoid tipping his hand. "In other words, if he reveals those details now," an irked **Greg Sargent** wrote in the *Washington Post*, "Democrats would subject his plan to more scrutiny." A new TIME/CNN poll indicates tight races in Florida and North Carolina, giving the campaign new urgency. It shows, says the *Wall Street Journal's* election blog, "why the stakes are so high for Mr. Romney at this week's convention."

### Split Decision

As Barack Obama and Mitt Romney face off, TIME's new book, *The Essential Voter's Guide* ([time.com/votersguide](http://time.com/votersguide)), spells out what's at stake. Mark Halperin, Joe Klein and the rest of TIME's political team draw on interviews with the candidates, their families and election insiders to take the measure of the contenders and their track records. Find the softcover special on newsstands now; the hardcover book will be available in early September.



### WRITE TO US

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③ Pass loop over hook

④ Pull to tighten



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# Briefing

'A storybook marriage?  
No, not at all. What Mitt Romney and  
I have is a real marriage.'

**1. ANN ROMNEY**, at the Republican National Convention, appearing to address critics who say her husband doesn't understand the average American

'You never know what bad is. We didn't think  
Katrina was going to be bad either.'

**2. JACKIE GROSCH**, who stayed in New Orleans during Hurricane Isaac; although most levees in the area held, the storm claimed at least 24 lives in Haiti

'Rape is rape. Period.  
End of story.'

**3. PAUL RYAN**, Republican vice-presidential nominee, echoing President Obama's reaction to Republican Senate candidate Todd Akin's claim that women rarely get pregnant from "legitimate rape"

'Nobody needs to cry for me.  
I'm going to be great.'

**4. LANCE ARMSTRONG**, after the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency stripped him of his seven Tour de France titles and banned him for life from cycling; Armstrong, who never failed a drug test, has denied all doping charges

'Avoid playmates with cameras!'

**5. RUPERT MURDOCH**, advising Prince Harry via Twitter on how to avoid another nude-photo leak; Murdoch's newspaper the *Sun* was one of the only British news outlets to publish the shots

**1.58  
MILLION**

Area, in square miles,  
of sea ice in the Arctic  
Ocean—a record low



**\$151  
BILLION**

Cost of the most recent  
proposal by Amtrak to  
build a high-speed rail  
network between Boston  
and Washington

**1%**

Percentage of American  
children who save their  
allowance money—  
totaling \$780 per year,  
on average

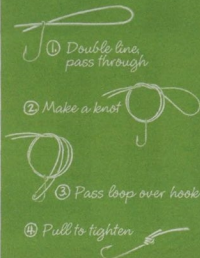


**230  
MILLION**

Age, in years, of a mite  
found preserved in amber  
in northern Italy



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found preserved in amber  
in northern Italy



Briefing

# LightBox



**Painting the town**

*Revelers in Dresden, Germany, bombard one another with colored powders during Holi Open Air, which mimics a Hindu spring festival, replete with Indian dancers and DJs*

**Photograph by Arno Burgi—DPA / Landov**  
[lightbox.time.com](http://lightbox.time.com)



## World



More than 2,000 American troops have died in Afghanistan so far

## Why Nobody Is Talking About The War in Afghanistan

**1 | AFGHANISTAN** The U.S. has 100,000 troops fighting and dying in the longest war in American history, but you won't hear much about Afghanistan on the campaign trail. That's not just because Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are broadly on the same page when it comes to ending the 11-year conflict that recently claimed its 2,000th U.S. service member. It's because presidential politics requires the projection of optimism and resolve, and Afghanistan is, frankly, a bit of a downer.

Each week brings new stories of U.S. and allied troops killed by the Afghans they've been training. Forty-two coalition troops have been killed in so-called insider attacks this year—12 in August alone. The U.S. military is investigating ways to combat what it concedes has become a systemic problem, especially since only a small proportion of the attacks are believed to be the work of Taliban infiltrators rather than Afghan government troops gone rogue. The military has begun assigning some U.S. service members to a "guardian angel" role of protecting other troops from the Afghans they're training. That's hardly reassuring, considering that the U.S. strategy is now to bring home most of its troops in 2014, handing over security duties to those same Afghan forces. The transition to mentoring Afghan forces actually increases the vulnerability of Western troops, because it

requires embedding smaller groups of NATO troops in Afghan units.

It's highly unlikely that the Taliban will be defeated militarily before the U.S. departure, nor is there any immediate prospect of a political solution to the conflict. That doesn't mean the insurgents will overrun Kabul in January 2015, but Washington will leave behind an Afghanistan locked in the same civil war that was under way when the U.S. invaded in late 2001—albeit with the battlefield now tilted in favor of the Taliban's enemies. Maintaining that imbalance will be the responsibility of the 380,000-plus Afghan personnel trained, equipped and funded by the U.S. and allied donors for the foreseeable future, their numbers far bigger than what Kabul could sustain on its own.

Questions of Afghan political will aside, whether or not Washington will keep funding Afghanistan's security after most U.S. troops leave is an open question—and one that's hardly been the stuff of presidential-campaign rhetoric. —TONY KARON

## SWEDEN

# \$804,000

Bill for a luxe James Bond-themed party thrown in June 2011 for Sweden's intelligence agency, Sapo—a controversial expense that's catching major flak in the wake of Sapo budget cuts

## U.K.

## 'He's big. He's always out in the fields.'

GINNY MURPHY, resident of St. Osyth, England, claiming that local sightings of a lion—which prompted a massive but unsuccessful search by police—were actually just of her oversize pet cat, Teddy Bear



## Sex Strikes: Are They Worth It?

**2 | TOGO** Will "Let's Save Togo," a weeklong sex strike led by women to push for the resignation of the nation's long-ruling Gnassingbe family, succeed? Here's how similar efforts have worked (or not) in other countries.





## Norwegian Mass Killer Sentenced

**5 | NORWAY** On Aug. 24 an Oslo court ruled that Anders Behring Breivik was sane and therefore culpable for the July 2011 bomb attack and shooting spree that killed 77 people in Norway. The court sentenced him to 21 years in prison—the maximum possible under Norwegian law. The judgment satisfied victims' relatives, who wanted to see a sane man held responsible, and the Norwegian public, which values rehabilitation over retribution. As one survivor said afterward, "That's staying true to our principles, and the best evidence that he hasn't changed society." Breivik said he will not appeal the verdict.



## More Misery in Syria

**3 | SYRIA** As aerial attacks persist in war-torn Syria, civilians continue to suffer—including this boy in Aleppo, shown being carried out of the operating room after an Aug. 24 air strike. One Syrian doctor, according to the news agency AFP, estimated that 25 people perish and 100 are injured daily.

## Old Kid on the Bloc

**4 | IRAN** Tehran played host to a meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), a Cold War-era bloc of countries that sought to chart a path away from the U.S. and the USSR. Heads of state from some 120 nations arrived in the Iranian capital, as did U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who shrugged off American calls for him not to attend as the U.S. tries to raise pressure on Iran's nuclear program. Here are three things to know about one of the world's biggest international forums.

1

### Solidarity

NAM was formed in 1961 in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, bringing together a host of so-called third-world nations, led by some of the 20th century's most famous statesmen



India's Jawaharlal Nehru



Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser

2

### Cataclysm

One of NAM's immediate concerns was the fear of nuclear annihilation; it led calls for disarmament and was staunchly antiwar



3

### Anachronism

Many in the West now dismiss the institution as a Cold War relic, sheared of any real purpose or identity with the fall of the USSR. But its advocates, including the Iranians, say its continued relevance is a sign of the growing economic and political clout of the rest of the world.

### KENYA

**PLEDGE:** No sex until relations improve between Kenya's warring unity parties

**DURATION:** One week in 2009

**PAYOFF:** Not much; the government still faces persistent political and social unrest

### LIBERIA

**PLEDGE:** No sex until violence ends in Liberia

**DURATION:** Throughout 2002 and 2003, according to sources

**PAYOFF:** Eventually, an end to the civil war—although that didn't happen for a couple of years

### COLOMBIA

**PLEDGE:** No sex until gang-inflicted bloodshed decreases in Pereira

**DURATION:** 10 days in 2006

**PAYOFF:** City's murder rate decreased, but not directly following the strike

### PHILIPPINES

**PLEDGE:** No sex until a violent southern region becomes more peaceful

**DURATION:** About a week in 2011

**PAYOFF:** Overall decrease in hostilities and increase in prosperity, according to the U.N.

LEAST EFFECTIVE

MOST EFFECTIVE

# Nation

## The Way to Win. Team Obama's game plan must focus on the basics: money, message and lots of Bubba

By Mark Halperin

Barack Obama's prospects for a second term depend as much on plain old campaign blocking and tackling as on great speeches or sparkling debate performances. Here's what the President and his troops need to do to stave off defeat in the face of high unemployment, towering deficits and widespread unease:

- ▶ **1. Avoid getting sucked into spending time and money in states Obama will win** even if Mitt Romney and his allies decide to invest heavily there. Examples: Michigan and Pennsylvania. The better-funded Republicans can play on a wider board this time around, thanks to Romney's fundraising prowess and super-PAC reinforcements. Obama doesn't have the luxury of flinging his funds wherever he likes.
- ▶ **2. Ride the wave of identity politics**, now one of the strongest forces in presidential elections. Communicate nonstop with Hispanics on the Dream Act, women on reproductive freedom, young people on Pell Grants, African Americans on health care and upper-income, educated voters on a balanced approach to deficit reduction and social issues.
- ▶ **3. Warm up the armies of Democratic lawyers** who have volunteered to fly to cities and states where new ballot-access and voter-ID laws might disenfranchise voters.
- ▶ **4. Voters might be tired of hearing it, but keep reminding them about Romney's ties to Bain Capital and his opposition to the auto-industry rescue.** Those lines of attack have slowed the Republican's growth in the industrial Midwest—and, if successfully prosecuted, could checkmate Romney in must-win Ohio.

▶ **5. Regain the upper hand on Medicare.** Republicans have eaten into the White House's advantage on health care for seniors by invoking Obama-care's shifting of funds away from the beloved program to pay for the President's new scheme. The Democrats have to design a campaign message and TV ads to reclaim the lost ground.

▶ **6. Suck it up and log the necessary hours to keep the campaign coffers filled.** That includes spending quality time with the bundlers who do the real work of bringing in funds. Obama's advisers have seen an uptick in the willingness of financiers to write big

checks and are cautiously optimistic that they can cut the gap to a survivable margin.

▶ **7. Send Bill Clinton out on the trail as often as his schedule allows**, hoping he'll repeat his TV testimonials on Obama's behalf to as many live audiences as possible.

▶ **8. Continue to reap the benefits of meticulous planning.** Some of the 2008 magic may be gone, but Team Obama has gained momentum with a greater daily presence on local television newscasts (one of the best ways to reach undecided voters) and on ethnic- and other niche-media outlets. Next up: critical last-minute voter registration, plus banking ballots through early, absentee and postal voting.

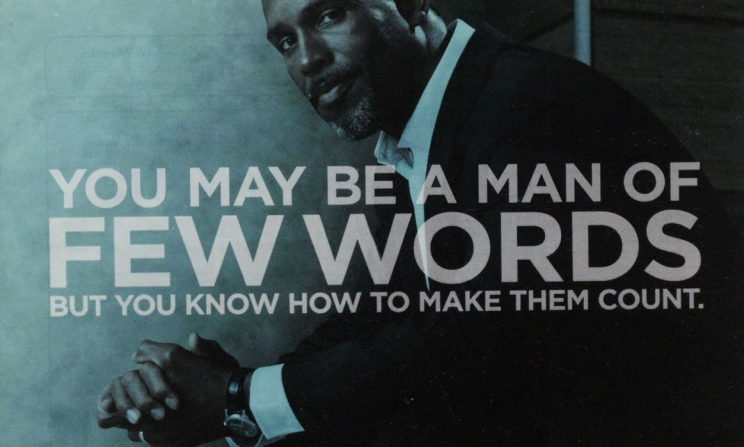
▶ **9. Pounce on extreme personal attacks by groups not directly controlled by the Romney campaign**, pointing out any ties to Boston, and dominating the news cycle with irresistibly extravagant outrage (real or feigned).

▶ **10. Use the power of incumbency.** The Administration is dropping all kinds of goodies on states like Ohio and Pennsylvania. Expect more million-dollar transit pork projects to be announced as Election Day approaches.

▶ **11. Never deviate from the core message** that was set in place even before Romney secured his nomination: Obama can't win if he can't swing the conversation away from the economy and render Romney as an out-of-touch plutocrat, an unacceptable alternative in the Oval Office.



PHOTO: ILLUSTRATION BY MRS. DONALD FOR TIME; OBAMA: BRENDAN HOFFMAN—GETTY IMAGES



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In the rare event of an erection lasting more than four hours, seek immediate medical help to avoid long-term injury.

In rare instances, men who take PDE5 inhibitors (oral erectile dysfunction medicines, including VIAGRA) reported a sudden decrease or loss of vision, or sudden decrease or loss of hearing. It is not possible to determine whether these events are related directly to these medicines or to other factors. If you experience any of these symptoms, stop taking PDE5 inhibitors, including VIAGRA, and call a doctor right away.

The most common side effects of VIAGRA are headache, facial flushing, and upset stomach. Less common are bluish or blurred vision, or being sensitive to light. These may occur for a brief time.

VIAGRA does not protect against sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

Please see Important Facts for VIAGRA on the following page or visit [viagra.com](http://viagra.com) for full prescribing information.

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(sildenafil citrate) tablets

(vi-AG-rah)

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Never take VIAGRA if you take any medicines with nitrates. This includes nitroglycerin. Your blood pressure could drop quickly. It could fall to an unsafe or life-threatening level.

### ABOUT ERECTILE DYSFUNCTION (ED)

Erectile dysfunction means a man cannot get or keep an erection. Health problems, injury, or side effects of drugs may cause ED. The cause may not be known.

### ABOUT VIAGRA

VIAGRA is used to treat ED in men. When you want to have sex, VIAGRA can help you get and keep an erection when you are sexually excited. You cannot get an erection just by taking the pill. Only your doctor can prescribe VIAGRA.

VIAGRA does not cure ED.

VIAGRA does not protect you or your partner from STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) or HIV. You will need to use a condom.

VIAGRA is not a hormone or an aphrodisiac.

### WHO IS VIAGRA FOR?

Who should take VIAGRA?

Men who have ED and whose heart is healthy enough for sex.

Who should NOT take VIAGRA?

- If you ever take medicines with nitrates:
  - Medicines that treat chest pain (angina), such as nitroglycerin or isosorbide mononitrate or dinitrate
- If you use some street drugs, such as "poppers" (amyl nitrite or nitrite)
- If you are allergic to anything in the VIAGRA tablet

### BEFORE YOU START VIAGRA

Tell your doctor if you have or ever had:

- Heart attack, abnormal heartbeats, or stroke
- Heart problems, such as heart failure, chest pain, or aortic valve narrowing
- Low or high blood pressure
- Severe vision loss
- An eye condition called retinitis pigmentosa
- Kidney or liver problems
- Blood problems, such as sickle cell anemia or leukemia
- A deformed penis, Peyronie's disease, or an erection that lasted more than 4 hours
- Stomach ulcers or any kind of bleeding problems

Tell your doctor about all your medicines. Include over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and herbal products. Tell your doctor if you take or use:

- Medicines called alpha-blockers to treat high blood pressure or prostate problems. Your blood pressure could suddenly get too low. You could get dizzy or faint. Your doctor may start you on a lower dose of VIAGRA.
- Medicines called protease inhibitors for HIV. Your doctor may prescribe a 25 mg dose. Your doctor may limit VIAGRA to 25 mg in a 48-hour period.
- Other methods to cause erections. These include pills, injections, implants, or pumps.
- A medicine called REVATIO. VIAGRA should not be used with REVATIO as REVATIO contains sildenafil, the same medicine found in VIAGRA.

### POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIAGRA

Side effects are mostly mild to moderate. They usually go away after a few hours. Some of these are more likely to happen with higher doses.

The most common side effects are:

- Headache
- Feeling flushed
- Upset stomach

Less common side effects are:

- Trouble telling blue and green apart or seeing a blue tinge on things
- Eyes being more sensitive to light
- Blurred vision

Rarely, a small number of men taking VIAGRA have reported these serious events:

- Having an erection that lasts more than 4 hours. If the erection is not treated right away, long-term loss of potency could occur.
- Sudden decrease or loss of sight in one or both eyes. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. They may be caused by conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes. If you have sudden vision changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Sudden decrease or loss of hearing. We do not know if these events are caused by VIAGRA and medicines like it or caused by other factors. If you have sudden hearing changes, stop using VIAGRA and all medicines like it. Call your doctor right away.
- Heart attack, stroke, irregular heartbeats, and death. We do not know whether these events are caused by VIAGRA or caused by other factors. Most of these happened in men who already had heart problems.

If you have any of these problems, stop VIAGRA. Call your doctor right away.

### HOW TO TAKE VIAGRA

Do:

- Take VIAGRA only the way your doctor tells you. VIAGRA comes in 25 mg, 50 mg, and 100 mg tablets. Your doctor will tell you how much to take.
- If you are over 65 or have serious liver or kidney problems, your doctor may start you at the lowest dose (25 mg).
- Take VIAGRA about 1 hour before you want to have sex. VIAGRA starts to work in about 30 minutes when you are sexually excited. VIAGRA lasts up to 4 hours.

Don't:

- Do not take VIAGRA more than once a day.
- Do not take more VIAGRA than your doctor tells you.
- If you think you need more VIAGRA, talk with your doctor.
- Do not start or stop any other medicines before checking with your doctor.

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# Health&Science

## Waste Not Can old food really be repurposed?

By Alice Park

NEARLY 1.5 BILLION TONS. THAT'S HOW MUCH spoiled and uneaten food people around the world throw out each year. In the U.S., roughly 40% of the food supply is wasted, according to the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC). But that kind of trash could soon become a lot more useful.

Building on efforts to turn grains and even human waste into biofuels and other valuable chemicals, Carol Lin, a biochemical engineer at the City University of Hong Kong, is developing a new kind of biorefinery. To head off a crisis at Hong Kong's landfills—they're going to be full within five years—she and her team, in partnership with Starbucks and a number of recycling groups, are converting organic food waste (think old pastries, bread and coffee grounds) into succinic acid. That chemical is a key component of biodegradable plastics, and is used in everything from laundry-detergent bottles to food additives to car parts.

The implications for the environment are huge. Succinic acid is currently made from petrochemicals in a process that leaves a harmful carbon footprint, and the U.S. Department of Energy has listed the chemical as one of a dozen that could be made more responsibly through bio-based processes. Although Lin's program is still in the pilot phase, companies in Europe, Asia and the U.S. are launching similar efforts to turn wasted food into a potentially valuable commodity. Lin is confident that the cost of the processing—it doesn't require any specialized tools—will make it a viable method for producing the acid.

She faces plenty of hurdles. Because food waste isn't as easy to transport (unlike petroleum, it starts to rot), researchers are still figuring out how to set up hygienic ways to process it quickly. Then there's the issue of scale: in her lab, Lin generates 81 kg of succinic acid from each ton of food waste she processes—a tiny fraction of the 44,000 tons manufacturers demand each year. But, says Allen Hershkowitz of NRDC, it's essential to keep trying. "No single undertaking is going to address all the waste we generate." But if this one can make good use of your stale muffin, that's a big step in the right direction.



# Connection at 2,900 Meters Under the Sea

April 12, 2010: The Caribbean Seabed

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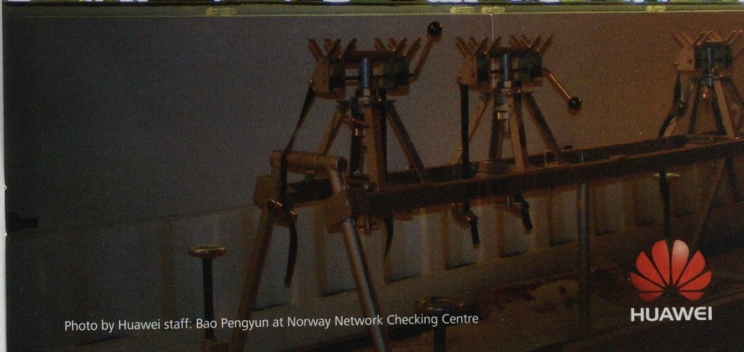
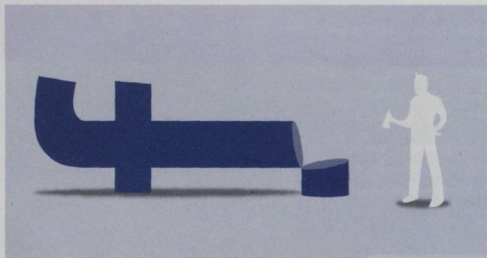


Photo by Huawei staff: Bao Pengyun at Norway Network Checking Centre



# Business



## Social-Media Meltdown. Insiders made a fortune. Others? Not so much

By Sam Gustin

FOR EARLY INVESTORS IN SOCIAL-MEDIA companies, the past year's high-profile initial public offerings have generated epic windfalls. Since early 2011, venture capitalists and executives have cashed out to the tune of billions of dollars. The most prominent insider so far is Peter Thiel, an early investor in Facebook, who sold some 20 million shares—worth about \$400 million—after the three-month lock-up period preventing insiders from selling their shares ended. That brings Thiel's total Facebook cash haul to over \$1 billion.

For public investors who participated in the IPOs, however, these social-media stocks haven't been anywhere near as lucrative. Following the insider cash-outs, Facebook shares are worth half their IPO price. Zynga shares have plunged by nearly 70%, and Groupon shares have plummeted by more than 80%. Wall Street giant Morgan Stanley was the lead underwriter in each of these IPOs.

So what explains the massive post-IPO declines? The market for technology stocks has changed dramatically since the dotcom crash of 2000. Start-ups are raising more money, in several rounds of investment, right up until they go public. With each round, a stake in the company gets more expensive, boosting valuations to sky-high levels. Facebook went through no fewer than 10 angel-investment and venture-capital

rounds; Zynga had seven; Groupon, six.

Those early investors can then trade their insider shares before the IPO on private exchanges like SecondMarket, open only to accredited investors who make over \$200,000 a year or are worth \$1 million or more. The rise of these pre-IPO secondary markets has caused valuations to soar even higher.

By the time Facebook, Groupon and Zynga went public, their valuations were so high that there was no more upside for public-market investors. All the upside had already been captured by deep-pocketed insiders. There was, however, plenty of remaining downside.

Not every hot social-media company goes public. The microblogging service Tumblr, for example, remained private even after reaching a valuation of \$800 million. It seems intent on taking a slow-growth path and cultivating its legion of loyal users. Instagram positioned itself to get "acqui-hired" by a bigger company. Facebook acquired the photo-sharing service for \$1 billion early this year and, as part of the deal, hired its top execs.

App.Net, on the other hand, took its case to the people. The social-networking service raised \$500,000 in less than a month through crowdfunding, with member fees from thousands of users going to finance its early development. Designed to be free of ads, the service is a reaction against Facebook. If it succeeds, its financing could be as well.

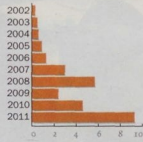
### TOTAL MARKET VALUE



Current valuations (excluding cash) as of Aug. 27

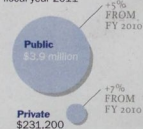
### SECONDARY MARKET FOR SHARES IN PRIVATE COMPANIES, WORLDWIDE

Transaction volume, in billions of dollars



### AUDITING FEES, PUBLIC VS. PRIVATE COMPANIES

Average per company, fiscal year 2011



### AGE OF A COMPANY AT IPO

1981–1984

4.6 years

Since 2007

9.4 years

Sources: Financial Executives International; NYFPEX Private Markets; National Venture Capital Association



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# Tech

## Samstung. Apple's court win over Samsung protects the iPhone. Will it hurt consumers?

By Harry McCracken

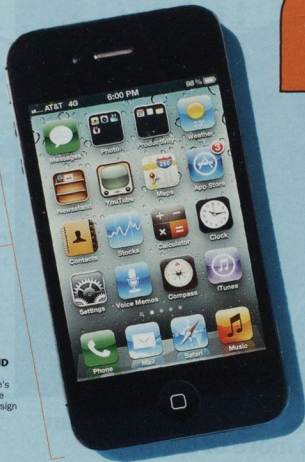
WHEN THE JURY IN A SAN JOSE, Calif., U.S. district court ruled on Aug. 24 that Korean electronics giant Samsung had infringed on patents Apple had invented for the iPhone and iPad, there were gasps over the damages: \$1.05 billion. But for a company like Samsung, with \$149 billion in annual sales, a billion bucks just isn't all that much cash. It's less than a month's worth of last year's operating profit.

The decision's real impact could still be huge, and it doesn't have anything to do with Samsung's decidedly Apple-esque phones and tablets of the past. It's about future product development moves that Apple's rivals will make as they seek to sidestep its legal wrath. The interested parties include Google, the creator of Android, the hugely popular software that was running the Samsung devices Apple sued over.

In the gadget business, everybody has always borrowed from everybody else; it's how progress happens. As countless pundits have pointed out, when Apple designed the first Macintosh computer in the early 1980s, it drew plentiful inspiration from the innovative graphical user interface developed at Xerox's Palo Alto Research Center. Then it added numerous original ideas of its own, making the Mac far more than a mere knockoff.

But the jury has changed

**LOOK AND FEEL**  
The iPhone's distinctive industrial design



The jury found that Samsung violated Apple patents in both software and hardware. Some examples

### SCROLL VS. ZOOM

Swipe with one finger to scroll through information; pinch and spread with your finger and thumb to zoom



### TOUCH AND MAGNIFY

Touch the screen with your finger to magnify the display



### THE BOUNCE-BACK EFFECT

If you try to venture past the end of a Web page or other item, it snaps back into place



the game, concluding that Apple owns mobile-device concepts the entire industry has embraced. So unless Samsung undoes Apple's victory in an appeals court, other companies may have to hobble their products by removing useful, familiar features. Or they could

attempt to license Apple's patents for a fee, which could result in higher prices. (Apple and Microsoft already have a cross-licensing agreement.)

Of course there's yet another, more benevolent scenario. Fear of Apple could spur other manufacturers to

build better, bolder devices. Case in point: Samsung's current flagship phone, the Galaxy S III, which obviously was designed to avoid ticking off Apple any further. It's the company's most inventive smart phone so far—and the most formidable iPhone rival on the market.

# Appreciation

TIME's July 25, 1969, cover depicting Armstrong on the moon



## Neil Armstrong. A man of grace in an era that needs more of them

By Jeffrey Kluger

I once watched Neil Armstrong sign his name, and it appeared to be one of the hardest things he'd ever done. It was in March 2010, and he, Gene Cernan and Jim Lovell—moon men all—were part of a morale tour of U.S. military bases in the Middle East. I went along, and on this particular evening, a party was being sponsored by the Navy to honor the astronauts. There was a queue to enter because attendees were expected to sign a guest book at the door. This presented Armstrong with a problem.

Since his return from the moon in 1969, signing his name was all anyone

seemed to want him to do. For a deeply private man, the offering up of the autograph had become an act of surrender, even of commerce—as the signature he handed over in a restaurant on a Monday would wind up for sale at an autograph show on a Tuesday. So he just stopped doing it—and now he'd have to.

Armstrong, the man of principle and hounded legend, could not sign; Armstrong, the ex-Navy man, could not decline. So Armstrong the pragmatist split the difference, taking the pen when his turn came and scribbling something wholly illegible—gibberish except for

the capital N. I still half suspect the page wound up on eBay the next day.

There was a lot to mourn when Armstrong died Aug. 25 at 82—most of all the loss of a man who had carried himself with such silent grace for so many years. He was a brave man who flew 78 combat missions over Korea and commanded a near disastrous Gemini 8 flight in 1966, calmly righting his wildly spinning spacecraft to get himself and crewmate Dave Scott home. But it was his command of the Apollo 11 moon landing that turned him into one of history's icons. Yet, for all the triumph of that flight, there was a sweet smallness to it too. Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin spent only 2 hr. 31 min. walking on the lunar surface and in all that time took care to stay close to their little ship. If the landing site were a baseball field and the lunar module were on the pitcher's mound, the men never got out of the infield—except for a brief detour Armstrong made to a crater in shallow right field.

But never mind that. Armstrong, Aldrin and Michael Collins came home heroes, Armstrong the greatest among them. He was only 38 when he walked on the moon, but he surely knew that if he lived to be 100, his life would forever be defined by the 151 minutes he spent getting lunar dust on his boots.

Armstrong seemed to make a sort of peace with that. One evening during our Middle East tour, all the astronauts were onstage before an audience of service members young enough to be their grandchildren. During the question-and-answer session, one audience member asked Armstrong if he wouldn't mind taking the mike and, well, saying the words—the famous words, those one-small-step words. I winced, and I suspect Lovell and Cernan did too. This was dog-and-pony stuff of the highest order. Armstrong just smiled and reached for the mike. His hand seemed shaky, and his voice was weak—not the clear Midwestern tones that were spoken in 1969 and have been heard and heard and heard ever since. But he spoke the words all the same—and the audience roared, and the applause rained down, and it was just the coolest and grandest and finest thing you could ever hope to see. So safe travels, Commander Armstrong. And thank you.



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# Rich Lowry



## A Bright, Shining Lie

Obama has walked away from the ideals that launched his career

**B**ARACK OBAMA'S STAR-TURN SPEECH at the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston sounds just as good now as it did eight years ago. It was hours before that performance that Obama told a reporter, "I'm LeBron, baby!" The boast is considered sheer hubris by his detractors, but it wasn't such a bad self-assessment. The background noise of Obama's 2004 speech is the low rumble of a political rocket about to slip the surly bonds of earth.

In the C-SPAN footage, Jesse Jackson stands and applauds, not realizing how thoroughly he would be eclipsed by the young African-American politician from Illinois. Hillary Clinton brims with joy, having no idea that she would be beaten by the newcomer for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination. "OH-BAH-MAH!" chants fill the arena—the first time most of the nation hears the name that will soon enough become iconic.

"Political genius," Otto von Bismarck once said, "consists of hearing the distant hoofbeat of the horse of history and then leaping to catch the passing horseman by the coattails." Obama's speech in Boston was the first sign that he was about to grab hold for a hell of a ride.

**But 2004 was a beautiful mirage.** Very little that was distinctive or stirring from the convention speech survived first contact with the reality of Barack Obama. Back then, he lambasted "the negative-ad peddlers who embrace the politics of 'anything goes.'" Now his campaign is a demolition machine with no regard for the truth. Then, he said, "There is not a black America and a white America and a Latino America." Now he wants to squeeze as many votes as possible out of a few key demographic groups. Then, he lamented how pundits

"like to slice and dice our country into red states and blue states." Now he presides over an electorate that is profoundly polarized by him.

Upon his election, Obama acted as any ideologue would. He pushed as much through as often as possible when he had maximal power, without seriously compromising on anything until the Democrats lost control of the House, after



which he cut a deal to extend the Bush tax cuts. Otherwise, after that electoral rebuke in 2010, he didn't make an opportunistic jag to the center but doubled down on left-wing populism.

Confronting a Congress of the opposing party, Ronald Reagan and Bill Clinton cut big deals. Reagan raised the retirement age for Social Security and reformed taxes with Democrats. Clinton reformed welfare and balanced the budget with Republicans. Obama blew up his debt-deal negotiations with Republican House Speaker John Boehner because he didn't want to be caught settling for less in tax revenue than what congressional Democrats wanted.

The same politician who spoke in 2004 of how "this country will reclaim its promise, and out of this long political darkness a brighter day will come" is not running for re-election this year with a transformative vision or really much of an agenda at all. He wants to roll back the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy, for about \$70 billion a year, when the annual deficit is running at over \$1 trillion. On most everything else, he simply hopes something will turn up with the same congressional Republicans he scorns.

**Obama is trying to win a second term** with a remorseless assault against Mitt Romney. From the beginning, his aides have been frank about the need to destroy the Republican challenger. Insider accounts of the Obama campaign reveal no evidence of the President's feeling the slightest prick of conscience over it. In fact, his team seems suffused with a grim pride over its willingness to do whatever it takes to win. In 2004, Obama was a bipartisan uniter; in 2012, he's Al Davis.

Not that he was really ever anything different. For all the alluring mood music in the 2004 speech, he didn't break any philosophical ground. He wasn't Bill Clinton challenging party orthodoxy. He rebaptized Democratic Party orthodoxy in a warm bath of pious uplift. He wasn't interested in compromise; he wanted unity entirely on his own terms.

Obama has never been a moderate, not in the Illinois legislature, not in the U.S. Senate and not in his 2008 primary campaign against Hillary Clinton. What he was until he assumed the presidency was essentially an unknown. Well, now we know.

The President can always return to the tropes of his 2004 speech, but there's no real going back. He might survive. But he won't inspire. On that memorable night in Boston eight years ago, he launched his national career on a bright, shining lie.

Lowry is the editor of *National Review*

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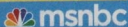


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**"THOSE WHO'VE GOTTEN  
ALL THE BREAKS THE  
LAST TEN YEARS WILL  
HAVE TO GIVE  
A LITTLE BIT MORE."**

*- Ed Schultz*

**LEAN FORWARD**



ED SCHULTZ, msnbc host





# Joe Klein



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## One for All and All for One

It's time for Democrats to move away from identity politics

**T**HE DEMOCRATS GATHER FOR THEIR 2012 National Convention feeling pretty good about their prospects, both immediate and long term. Despite a lame economy and widespread public disappointment with his performance, President Obama seems to have a slight edge in his race against Mitt Romney. And if Obama beats Romney, the Republican Party will have a civil war. The Tea Party and extreme conservatives will argue that the party nominated a moderate yet again and lost, yet again. The result of that conflagration would probably be an extremely conservative nominee in 2016 who—in the prevailing Democratic fantasy—will be demolished by Hillary Clinton, whose time would finally have come. But even if Obama loses to Romney, Democrats feel their party will be effortlessly propelled by demographic winds to future victories in a country where nonwhites are gradually moving toward majority status. Wise Republicans like Jeb Bush also see this train leaving the station and argue that the Republicans must broaden their appeal.

**As in politics, so in policy.** The Democrats are, for once, at peace with themselves. The party's left would like to see more income redistribution at home and fewer drone strikes overseas, but they are a distinct minority. The President has staked out a strong, centrist national-security policy. He has also established himself as willing to compromise to get things done, especially when it comes to the looming fiscal crisis and the long-term deficit. "We're now the party of pragmatists, and the Republicans are the party of ideologues," a prominent Democrat told me. "That is a complete reversal of where we were after the 1960s." There is, in fact, a slightly smug lassitude affecting the Democrats, convinced as they are

of their own rectitude and the extremist depredations of the GOP.

But let me afflict the comfortable. The Democrats have a serious problem. It is a problem that stems from the party's greatest strength: its long-term support for inclusion and equal rights for all, its support of racial integration and equal rights for women and homosexuals and its humane stand on immigration reform. Those heroic positions, which I celebrate, cost the Democrats more than a few elections in the past.



And they caused an understandable, if misguided, overreaction within the party—a drift toward identity politics, toward special pleading. Inclusion became exclusive. The Democratic National Committee officially recognizes 14 caucuses or "communities," most having to do with race, gender, sexual orientation or ethnicity.

Many of these groups had a purpose in the beginning. African Americans had the ultimate historic complaint. The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender caucus (LGBT, if you're scoring at home) worked effectively and won the Democrats' support for a full roster of human rights, including marriage. The women's caucus represented perhaps the most successful civil rights movement of our lifetime. Women are moving beyond equality now toward

dominance as more of them graduate from college than men—and fewer of them drop out of high school—and take their places atop major companies, government agencies and, someday soon, the presidency.

But if I'm a plain old white insurance salesman, I look at the Democratic Party and say, What's in it for me? These feelings are clearly intensifying in this presidential campaign. They are bound to increase, perhaps dangerously, as the white electoral majority (currently about 70%) diminishes over time. If the Democratic Party truly wants to be a party of inclusion, it must reach out to those who are currently excluded from its identity politics. It needs to disband its caucuses. It needs to say, We are proud of our racial and ethnic backgrounds, our different

religions, our lifestyle differences. But the things that unite us are more important than the things that divide us. We have only one caucus—the American caucus.

**A few years ago, a leading Democratic thinker said,** "The only way my life makes sense is if regardless of culture, race, religion, tribe, there is this com-

monality, these essential human truths and passions and hope and moral precepts that we can reach out beyond our differences. If that is not the case, then it is pretty hard for me to make sense of my life. So that is the core of who I am." That was Barack Obama, of course, in an interview with the author David Maraniss, reminiscing about his own struggle for identity, expressing the American Dream as purely as it can be done. Obama's election as President, in itself, moved us down the road toward the fruition of that dream. But there is another step to be taken now, and that is for him to lead his party past the politics of identity into a new era of American unity. *E Pluribus Unum* could, and should, be Barack Hussein Obama's greatest legacy.

ELECTION  
2012  
Democratic  
Convention



**At ease** The President and his trip director Marvyn Nicholson talk before a rally in Rochester, N.H., on Aug. 18

# OBAMA PLAYS HARD BALL

HIS POSTPARTISANSHIP  
NEVER STOOD A CHANCE. IF THERE'S  
A SECOND TERM, THE  
PRESIDENT PLANS A DIFFERENT GAME  
BY MICHAEL SCHERER

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CALLIE SHELL FOR TIME

# BARACK OBAMA CAN'T GET ENOUGH

of the Ugandan Little League team. As Air Force One takes off from another campaign rally in Ohio, the President settles into his airborne conference room, gum lodged in the back of his mouth, with ESPN's live coverage of 12-year-olds' World Series baseball on the flat screen. He raves to his staff about the story line, an up-from-obscurity fable of barefoot kids from East Africa playing in central Pennsylvania. There is, after all, something familiar about the narrative arc: long-shot outsiders, international roots, hope, aspiration, change.

The truth is, televised sports remains Obama's primary diversion these days, his escape from nearly four years of unrelenting trial more severe than anyone expected. His hair went white as he steered the country clear of a second Great Depression, struggled with 8% unemployment, wound down two wars, sent bombers to Libya, ordered the death of Osama bin Laden, rewrote banking rules and pushed through the largest new entitlement program since 1965. But he always tried to have dinner with Michelle and the girls and to catch *SportsCenter*.

A few weeks earlier, at one of the Sunday campaign-strategy sessions in the White House's Roosevelt Room, Obama gave his top political pros grief for all the spots they were dropping in his Northern Virginia media market. "Guys, I understand why you are doing this," he said, in a characteristic bit of ribbing that his golf partners know well. "But I got to tell you, the only respite I have is watching sports and the Olympics, and then my ads come on. Can't I have any refuge?"

Talking to the President, it's easy to get the sense that he would prefer a politics that worked more like organized sports, with the clean justice of objective referees and rules designed to elevate the best performer from a level playing field. He embraces the challenge of policy, craves high-minded political debate and hungers to win. But four years after rising from obscurity to conquer the highest office in the land, he is still struggling to adapt to the shifting terrain of American politics—the quirks, eccentricities and passions of both the electorate and his Republican foes. Given the choice, he would probably turn off the campaign ads, get rid of the \$10 million checks he never seems to attract, marginalize the horse-race media and dispose of the partisan furies that drive people to what he sees as mistaken conclusions. "If he could sit down with each person in America to explain his policies," says his campaign spokeswoman Jen Psaki, "he believes he would win the day."

But that's not how this game works, and it's not how his own slash-and-burn campaign is approaching 2012. He won the presidency in 2008 by presenting himself as a vessel for the nation's dreams, a Rorschach test for a country ready to believe again in its future. Four years later, he is a fixed thing, a person with actual successes and failures, though there is disagreement about which are which and what they represent. On a single city block, you can find people who know him as a savior, a soured bet, a socialist or six other things in between. What everyone agrees on is that things are not as they were.







**Ready to roll** The President arrives in Manchester, N.H., on Aug. 18 to campaign. He finds himself running a much different race from that of 2008

ELECTION  
2012  
Democratic  
Convention





**Voter grab** Obama greets supporters in Rochester. The race isn't about who is more empathetic, he says; it's about facts and the economy

The nation once ready to dream is now racked by intractable economic anxiety. The promise to unite red and blue America has become a vow to "break this fever" and "pop the blister" of a government dangerously resistant to compromise. Calls to heal the planet and stop the oceans' rise have become warnings about game-changing cuts to the social safety net and a resurgent conservative movement that seemed in retreat just four years ago. A President who long defined himself by transcending differences has decided that there is no way around the fight before him.

## LOSS OF REASON

JUST A COUPLE OF DOORS UP TOWARD THE front of the plane sits the President's flying office, as impersonal as a prefab cubicle, with pleated lampshades, dun wall coverings and a carpet stamped with stars. His laptop lies open, alone on the polished desk, across from a tray where an aide has placed the two novels he is reading at the moment, *Home* by Toni Morrison and *Salvage the Bones* by Jesmyn Ward. Both authors are award-winning women who focus on the same subject, the hardship and heroism of poor Americans who will never see the inside of a Boeing 747, much less one outfitted to survive a nuclear war.

The President takes his place in a swiveling captain's chair, rests his elbows on his knees so he can be heard over the roar of the engines and lays out the choice in 2012 as he sees it. It's not just the one between him and Mitt Romney, or between liberal and conservative views on Medicare and education. It's between pragmatism and ideology, rationality and irrationality. "This isn't a matter of who is more patriotic or who is more empathetic toward people or who is nicer," he says. "It's a hardheaded assessment of what makes our economy grow. And the facts are on my side in this argument. The question is whether while we're still digging ourselves out of this hole that we found ourselves in, that the facts will win the day."

One could argue that Obama's confi-

dence in his powers of reason and in finding the Platonic ideal of policy has always defined him. It was tangible in 2008, when he got caught at a fundraiser in San Francisco bemoaning fearful citizens who "cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them." It was there in 2010, when he told donors in Boston, "Part of the reason that our politics seems so tough right now, and facts and science and argument does not seem to be winning the day all the time, is because we're hardwired not to always think clearly when we're scared." He understood himself as the level head in a world off kilter.

The mystery of Obama's time in office is how those powers of deduction allowed him to so misread his political opponents. It started in the first weeks of 2009 with the \$780 billion stimulus. Obama expected a fight around the edges, with Republicans coming to the table for a deal that virtually all economists said needed to be made. But GOP leaders were already playing a longer game, sowing the seeds of a strategy that cast short-term economic intervention, which they had supported repeatedly before, as radical "sugar rush" economics two steps removed from Karl Marx.

The President powered through, winning his economic fire wall by the narrowing of margins. But his next move repeated the same mistake, as he lost the summer

and fall of his first year in an effort to win over a few Senate Republicans to the cause of health care reform. None joined, despite their past support for similar ideas, and the furies that were unleashed in the process helped deliver the House of Representatives to Republican control in 2010. "I guess you could call it a misread," says David Axelrod, the President's friend and strategist, who worked in the White House during the Administration's first two years. "We didn't realize the degree to which Republicans in Washington would make a decision from the get-go that they didn't want to cooperate because they thought bipartisan solutions would re- duce to the President's benefit."

Obama's response in 2011 was to double down again. By then, it was clear that the 2008 election had not just been his victory. It was a new beginning for a strain of conservative thought that viewed debt as a moral outrage and compromise as a type of surrender. Obama followed the polls to focus on reducing the deficit, agreeing with Republican demands that every new borrowed dollar be matched by offsetting spending cuts or revenue. He began secret negotiations with House Speaker John Boehner for a massive \$4 trillion grand bargain: Cut entitlement spending, increase tax revenue, raise the debt ceiling and simplify the tax code, all in a balanced way for the good of the country.

It was the ultimate test of Obama's Platonic theory of policy, of bringing together left and right to create something greater. And it ran head-on into a Tea Party buzz saw. Boehner could not bring his members to meet the President halfway. The markets were spooked, and the country was despondent. The invented crises directly cost taxpayers at least \$1.3 billion, or \$4 for each American man, woman and child, as interest rates ticked up. The hard decisions were put off until after the next election. Irrationality won the day.

Chicago Mayor Richard Daley, the father, used to say, "Good government is good politics." The Obama White House adopted a variation of the cliché—if the policy is right, the politics will follow—

ON A SINGLE  
CITY BLOCK  
YOU CAN FIND  
PEOPLE WHO  
KNOW HIM AS  
A SAVIOR, A  
SOURD BET  
OR A SOCIALIST



# HAIR TODAY. GRAY TOMORROW. HOW THE BIG JOB AGES THE LUCKY WINNER

BY ALICE PARK

repeating it even as it found its policy successes turn into electoral liabilities. On Air Force One, I ask Obama how he squares Daley's old maxim with the electoral realities of the past three years. "I don't think they are conflicting," he responds. "I believe that if you do the right thing, then public opinion will eventually follow. But public opinion doesn't always match up precisely with the election cycle, right?" People still need to find out, for instance, how his health care reforms will affect them by lowering prescription costs and keeping their adult children insured. That will take some time, he says. He is smiling. "I've got an election in less than three months, not five years from now."

## WAR FOOTING

OBAMA'S RE-ELECTION CAMPAIGN EFFECTIVELY began the day in 2011 that the debt-ceiling deal fell apart, when his presidency had hit its lowest point. With his reputation as a strong leader dropping in polls, the President's team believed that hard-line conservatives in the House had finally revealed themselves, showing a willingness to imperil the country and do it harm to make their point. The battle lines for the next election were drawn.

Obama called his staff to the Roosevelt Room and announced a shift to war footing. The backroom deal would be left behind for the moment, as would the exclusive focus on deficits. The debate would move forward on the President's terms, with an emphasis on rebuilding the economy with government investment and increasing the tax burden for the wealthy to forestall deep entitlement cuts. If Congress did not cooperate, Obama would not wait. He ordered his staff to find ways to boost the economy through executive action. "He is a very rational person, so when you're faced with irrationality that can be a jarring thing," says David Plouffe, the senior political strategist at the White House, who managed the 2008 campaign. "I think we learned to size up our political opposition in a little more sober way."

The American Jobs Act, which Obama

BEFORE

AFTER

CLINTON,  
1992  
DON'T  
STOP  
THINKING  
ABOUT  
TOMORROW



CLINTON,  
1996  
TOMORROW

BUSH,  
2000  
BUSH  
JUNIOR



BUSH,  
2004  
BUSH  
JUNIOR  
SENIOR

OBAMA,  
2008  
HOPE



OBAMA,  
2012  
CHANGE

It seems that Presidents go through 50 shades of gray between Inauguration, terrorist attacks, economic meltdowns and running for re-election. No matter what party they are in or what era they oversee, Commanders in Chief age before our eyes. But is it inevitable?

According to the latest science, yes. It's been only a decade since researchers have been able to tease apart exactly how hair follicles work to sprout new, properly hued hair during much of our lifetimes. The short explanation is that the follicles simply can't do it forever. Stem cells

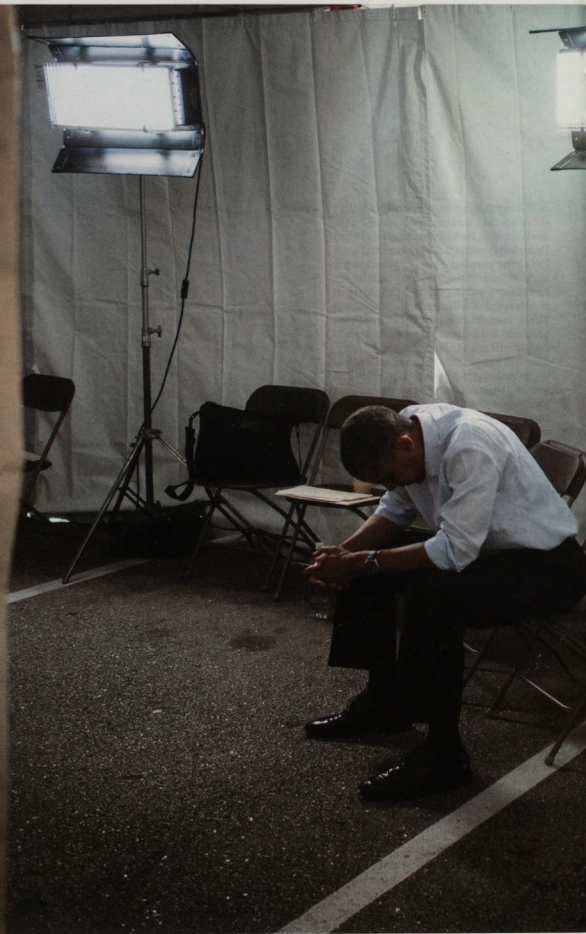
that make melanocytes, which deposit pigment in nascent hair, lose their ability to replenish themselves as we age, so beginning in our 30s, follicles are gradually deprived of color. Because most of our Presidents reach office in their 40s or 50s, just as more of these stem cells are dying off, some of the graying that's visible is due to normal aging.

But it turns out that these same stem cells are also sensitive to physiological changes that can prompt them to peter out prematurely. Elaine Fuchs, a cell biologist at Rockefeller University and a leading researcher in hair growth, says it's plausible that stress can accelerate the death of

these stem cells and cause whiter hairs to bloom. "Once a hair grays, even though you may not be stressed, you still end up with gray hair," she says. "So graying has to be related to something, like stress, that kills off the melanocyte stem cells permanently."

The leading culprits are hormones like cortisol and the production of free radicals that tend to surge as the body responds to crises. Of course, wrestling daily with other politicians might trigger that response too. The thought alone is enough to give anyone a few gray hairs.

ELECTION  
2012  
Democratic  
Convention





**Presidential pause** Near the end of a long campaign day, Obama listens to introductions before being brought onstage for a rally in Rochester



drafted over the August 2011 recess, was never intended to win Republican support. It was a demonstration project to expose the ideologies of the Grand Old Party as more focused on fiscal restraint and wealthy taxpayers than infrastructure spending and middle-class benefits. Obama soon found he could make Republicans blink on small things. He traveled to college campuses to demand that Congress extend student-loan subsidies without cutting other domestic spending. He forced Republicans to cave on their opposition to an extension of the payroll tax cut without offsetting savings and called the bluff of those who threatened to hold up the budget yet again in 2012. At one point, Obama even stood before an aging bridge that connected Ohio and Kentucky, the respective home states of Boehner and Senate GOP leader Mitch McConnell. "Mr. Boehner, Mr. McConnell, help us rebuild this bridge!" the President thundered.

This is the Obama now running for reelection. He is less a community organizer trying to balance disparate interests than a guy with a quick left jab waiting to step back into the ring. One can sense his frustration at having allowed his opponents to define him for so long to so many. "Look," he says, still leaning forward, the words coming faster now. "They love to paint me as this Big Government, tax-and-spend liberal. The truth is that growth in federal government is slower than at any time since Dwight Eisenhower. Taxes are lower than at any time since Dwight Eisenhower. The tax reforms I'm calling for would simply take us back to the tax rates under Bill Clinton for people above \$250,000, which means taxes will still be lower under me than they were under either Bill Clinton or Ronald Reagan. We're not looking for anything radical here."

The question is whether his new governing style will achieve any more success in a second term. Even with an Obama victory in November, there is little hope that Democrats can retake the House of Representatives and a solid chance

that Republicans will gain control of the Senate. The no-compromise blocs of Tea Party sympathizers in both chambers are more likely to grow than shrink. If Romney loses, many Republicans will no doubt conclude that it was because he wasn't conservative enough, and they will call for a return to obstruction.

And then there are the mess of deadlines that loom. If Congress fails to act, all income taxes will rise in 2013, along with taxes on dividends and capital gains. The Pentagon and other federal agencies will face \$1.2 trillion in painful across-the-board cuts, and the debt ceiling will have to be raised again before the spring, lest the nation default on its teetering good name. In the meantime, the lingering uncertainty continues to put a damper on the one thing all politicians claim to care about most: economic growth and the new jobs that come with it.

Obama answers these concerns with a variation on another cliché: elections have consequences. "The American people will have made a decision, and hopefully that will impact how Republicans think about these problems," he says. "And I believe that in a second term, where Mitch McConnell's imperative of making me a one-term President is no longer relevant, they recognize what the American people are looking for is for us to get things done." But he is not just betting on hope and belief to get him through the next four years.

## THE NEW GAME PLAN

ON THE EVENING OF NOV. 4, 2008, OBAMA appeared before a few hundred thousand people in Chicago's Grant Park as President-elect for the first time. The speech he gave was an homage to the crowd, a defiant declaration that the roles of governing and governed were about to change. "This is your victory," he said. "I will ask you to join in the work of remaking this nation, the only way it's been done in America for 221 years—block by block, brick by brick, callused hand by callused

hand." He repeated his refrain, "Yes we can," seven times. The crowd chanted the same phrase in return.

Then the bottom fell out of the economy, and that spirit of civic participation gave way to an era of crisis. What went wrong? "I've given that a lot of thought," says Obama. "And I do think that we had the best of intentions in 2009 and 2010. Again, we had to move very quickly, which means that our biggest concern was, How do we get 60 votes right now to get this done?" But then he pivots, saying he still thinks he can approach a second term differently. "I do think we're going to bring in the voices of the American people much more systematically, much more regularly," he continues. "Finding the right mechanisms to do that is something that we're going to spend a lot of time thinking about."

Just as Obama depended on an inside game to achieve results in the past, he is convinced he will need an expanded outside game in the coming years. The only thing likely to force compromise on the Republicans in Congress is the prospect of future electoral defeat. After November, the White House will seek to make that a reality for Republicans by pressing the case to the American people that compromise on deficits and tax reform cannot wait. Then Obama can pick or choose his issues. One of the first big initiatives planned for 2013 is new legislation to reform the nation's immigration system, a wedge issue designed to force a civil war within the GOP between its increasingly nativist grassroots base and a political leadership that understands the danger of bucking demographic trends by alienating Latino voters. In many ways, the 2012 campaign would not end with the election.

Obama also plans to redouble his commitment to political reform, which got muddled in the Administration's first few years as he cut deals with powerful interests like the drug lobby to get health care reform passed. "One conversation I think we're going to have to have with the entire country after this election is, Do we want a situation in which undisclosed donors writing \$10 million checks have

FOR TIME'S  
COVERAGE  
OF THE  
PRESIDENT,  
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time.com/  
obama





**Up close** A supporter gives the President a hug before a rally at New Hampshire's Windham High School

such disproportionate influence over the course of the country?" he continued. "And if not, what can we do to change it?"

But the biggest accomplishment of a second Obama term is likely to be the preservation of all that he accomplished in the first term. Romney's election and Republican control of the House and Senate could create another dramatic swing of the increasingly erratic political pendulum. Obamacare and financial reform would be weakened if not overturned, and there are countless Obama-branded programs that would disappear under GOP control. "What he really doesn't want is to be the guy who allowed the Republicans to come back in and reverse the course of the last four years," says another senior White

House adviser. "If the election is lost, he will feel responsible for that result."

In other words, the stakes are once again ratcheting up for a President who has endured a more rapid rise, under greater pressure, than any other American figure in recent history. As he approaches the last campaign of his career, Obama finds himself battling the forces that motivated him in the first place: the cynicism he identifies that says government should not seek to provide for the greater good, the inflexibility of ideologies that disrupt progress, the very notion that divisions cannot

be bridged. "What I wake up determined to accomplish every single day is making the best decisions I can," he says. "And the only thing then to guide you is what you genuinely think is best for the country. Because if you start trying to guess what's going to be most politically advantageous or you try to game all that stuff out, you'll get lost very quickly."

For the Ugandan Little League athletes, it was enough to qualify for the World Series even if they won only one game there. It was enough to play on the global stage, to open new doors for whole generations of children, to give their all and to do their best. History will record that the same cannot be said of Barack Obama. He has not yet accomplished what he came to do. ■

ELECTION  
**2012**  
Democratic  
Convention





**Homeward bound** After a day of campaigning in New Hampshire, the President heads back to the White House

# THE INTERVIEW

BARACK OBAMA SPOKE WITH TIME'S  
MICHAEL SCHERER ON AUG. 21. EXCERPTS:

**Many voters in 2008 thought you could change the tone in Washington, change politics. Did you do something wrong? And why will the next four years be different?**

The message I have for them is no different than the message I have for the rest of the country, which is, I ran for office to not only deal with a looming economic crisis but also reverse a decade in which middle-class families had seen their security erode. That's what the Recovery Act was about. That's what saving the auto industry was about. That's what health care was about. And for those who were hoping that Washington would be more focused on dealing with the problems that everyday Americans face, as opposed to party politics, I'm one of those people.

And I still believe that that's what the American people are looking for: solving problems. What I've tried to do is to take ideas from everyone—Democrats and Republicans—that I thought would make a difference in the lives of working families. That's why the Recovery Act—a third of it was tax cuts, traditionally an idea Republicans supported. That's why our health care bill relies on private insurance and why it looks so much like Governor Romney's health care bill.

**So on a couple of those examples—on stimulus, on health care reform and then on the debt ceiling—at each of those points, you express surprise and frustration that Republicans haven't come further along with you. Has that changed the way you approach them?**

Well, one of the good things about this election is it's going to give voters a very clear choice. I want to keep taxes low for

98% of Americans—everybody making under \$250,000. Governor Romney wants to cut taxes by another \$5 trillion, including for the wealthiest Americans, and to pay for it, potentially tax middle-class folks to the tune of about \$2,000.

I want to continue to invest in things like wind energy. Governor Romney wants to continue \$4 billion worth of subsidies to the oil companies. I want to implement the health care reform and balance our budget in sensible ways, making sure that we're eliminating waste and fraud from Medicare but making sure it's still a guarantee for seniors. Governor Romney and Congressman Ryan want to set up a voucher plan.

So given how stark the choices are, I do think that should I be fortunate enough to have another four years, the American people will have made a decision. And hopefully, that will impact how Republicans think about these problems. I believe that in a second term, where Mitch McConnell's imperative of making me a one-term President is no longer relevant, they recognize what the American people are looking for: is for us to get things done.

**What is your message to Democrats about what you're willing to put on the table to get a deal with Republicans on entitlements?**

I want a balanced approach to deficit reduction that combines additional revenue, particularly from folks like me who can afford it, with prudent cuts on both the discretionary side and the mandatory side but that still allows us to make investments in the things we need to grow.

And that means that I'm prepared to

look at reforms in Medicaid. I'm prepared to look at smart reforms on Medicare. But there are things that I won't do, and this is part of the debate we're having in this election. I do not think it is a good idea to set up Medicare as a voucher system in which seniors are spending up to \$6,000 more out of pocket. That was the original proposal Congressman Ryan put forward. And there is still a strong impulse I think among some Republicans for that kind of approach.

Now, the good news is that if you're willing to raise taxes on millionaires and billionaires, then you can make modest reforms on entitlements, reduce some additional discretionary spending, achieve deficit reduction and still preserve Social Security and Medicare and Medicaid in ways that people can count on. The only reason that you would have to go further than that is if there's no revenue whatsoever. And that's a major argument we're having with the Republicans.

**You said one of the mistakes you see in the first term was not telling that story better. What does it mean to tell the story better in the next four years?**

Well, what I meant by that is that we were in the midst of a once-in-a-lifetime crisis, so we had to just do stuff fast. And sometimes it wasn't popular. And we didn't have the luxury of six months to explain exactly what we were doing with the Recovery Act, which was basically a jobs act and making sure middle-class families didn't fall into poverty act.

And there were all kinds of things we could do to have explained that effectively, but we didn't have time. The auto bailout—now a lot of people are coming around and saying that was the right thing to do. But at the time, I think it polled at 10%. And we didn't have time to worry about that. We had a million jobs at stake in places like Ohio and Michigan, and we needed to make sure that we acted quickly.

**I've heard two messages about the way politics works. One is, you've said—and your staff will say—variations on the line that if you get the policy right, the politics**





## 'THIS ISN'T ABOUT WHO IS MORE PATRIOTIC OR WHO IS NICER.'

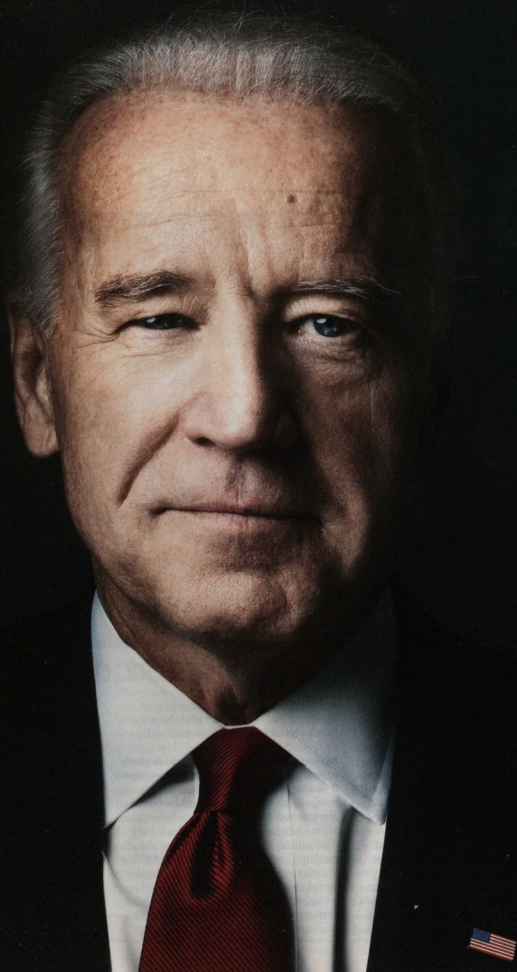
**follows. You've also said a number of times, usually in fundraisers, that when people get angry or anxious, that rationality and science and reason don't always carry the day. So now that you're four years in, which is winning out? How do you see it?** One thing I've learned as President—I've learned many things, but one thing that's been confirmed for me is that when you're sitting in this office, the weight of the office, the realization of how many people rely on you, the conversations you have with folks who are struggling, the sacrifices you see of soldiers who are coming home after losing a leg or worse in a war, require you to make the very best

decisions you can and set aside for a moment what it means for you politically.

**I assume you've done a pretty close study of your opponent, Mitt Romney. I wonder if you could point to a couple of other things in his record and things he has accomplished that you actually admire.** He strikes me as somebody who is very disciplined. And I think that that is a quality that obviously contributed to his success as a private-equity guy. I think he takes his faith very seriously. And as somebody who takes my Christian faith seriously, I appreciate that he seems to walk the walk and not just be talking

the talk when it comes to his participation in his church. But the fundamental difference between Governor Romney and myself, aside from some of our life experiences, I think is really a matter of how do you grow an economy that is strong and healthy over the long term. This isn't a matter of who is more patriotic or who is more empathetic toward people or who is nicer. It's a hardheaded assessment of what makes our economy grow. And the facts are on my side in this argument. The question is whether while we're still digging ourselves out of this hole that we found ourselves in, that the facts will win the day. ■

ELECTION  
2012  
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# LET THERE BE JOE

HIS MOUTH GETS AHEAD OF  
HIS BRAIN. BUT JOE BIDEN'S HEART  
IS THE DEMOCRATS' KILLER APP

BY DAVID VON DREHLE

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARCO GROB FOR TIME

# AS ATTACK DOGS GO, JOE BIDEN IS

more chocolate Lab than Doberman pincher. The Vice President will perform the traditional wet work assigned to presidential running mates, but never with the cold dispatch of his predecessors Dick Cheney and Al Gore. Like a great snuffling puppy, he can't help getting too enthusiastic. When he was a younger man, as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, he was assigned the unpleasant task of eviscerating Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas. His long-winded, half-apologetic, nonquestion questions left witnesses befuddled and had millions of Americans longing for a muzzle. More recently, set loose on Republicans Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, he went bounding eagerly up and over the line, adopting his version of a preacher's drawl to tell an audience that included many African Americans that the GOP wants to "put y'all back in chains."

That one set off a howling of rebuke and fevered talk of dumping Biden from the ticket. Biden's gonna happen. The Democratic ticket is too finely balanced to tinker with it. Biden's exuberant too-muchness warms the cool reserve of the man he calls "my boss." Not to overdo the pet analogies, but there is something catlike about President Obama when he levels that gaze that seems to say, I don't need your love—it's your vote I'm after.

Biden is Dixieland swing, Obama is Miles Davis. Biden's a banana split, Obama is grapefruit sorbet. Biden's a bubble bath, Obama a dip in a Minnesota lake. In the coming campaign for the hearts and minds of America's remaining undecided

ed voters, the hearts part is Biden's brief.

Desperate to hold on to the ticket's evaporating 2008 victory margin, Biden campaigns one vote at a time. As the liberal Democrat handpicked by Strom Thurmond to deliver the ancient conservative's eulogy, he has shown there is no one on earth he won't work to win over. See him in Martinsville, Va., one recent day, striding toward the door of the Coffee Break Café. Biden loves diners and firehouses and high school football fields. He has been alerted that stock-car king Glen Wood is inside the Coffee Break; it's where Wood hangs out when he is not busy running his world-class NASCAR team, Wood Brothers Racing. So Biden bursts through the door with his hair plugs waving and a big smile and booms, "I heard somebody in here won the Daytona!" Wood Brothers took the flag in 2011 with Trevor Bayne behind the wheel.

And guess what? Biden wishes he could be Glen Wood. "This guy did what I dreamed of, man," Biden emotes. "I'd trade being Vice President in a heartbeat for having won Daytona."

He has other wishes too. During an impromptu stop at a high school football practice in South Minneapolis recently, he confided to the boys, "I'm Vice President, and let me tell you, I'd trade it all to go back and play my senior year again."

Granted, the vice presidency is not Biden's fondest wish. He has run twice for the top job and may run again. But all things considered, he has seemed happy enough to shepherd the Administration's unprecedented stimulus billions through

the gate, and he took obvious joy at helping seal the Democratic Party's "BFD" of government-supported health insurance for all. Why these reveries, then, about trading it all away? Some politicians try to relate to voters. Biden claims to want to switch places with them.

How far this team has come in four years. Obama's hope-and-change campaign of 2008 was a symphony, not a PowerPoint, and its motto—"Yes we can!"—was more a yearning than a thought. When Biden joined the ticket, he was the seasoned statesman, the venerable Washington hand who reassured swing voters that it was safe to trust the new guy and follow their hearts. Accepting the vice-presidential nomination in Denver, Biden leveraged his long tenure in the U.S. Senate to put the dagger of Brutus between the Republican nominee's shoulders. "John McCain is my friend. We've known each other for three decades. We've traveled the world together," he said. On issue after issue, however, "John McCain was wrong. Barack Obama was right."

This time, in working-class neighborhoods and along rural byways—the pie-and-football country where Biden does his thing—the question is whether Obama feels people's fear and pain. Does he really believe that "the private sector is doing fine" and that Americans, jobless and in debt, stand most in need of larger-storage batteries, faster trains and a 4.6% hike in the top marginal tax rate?

Enter Biden, a heart on the sleeve of the Administration, the plucky boy from scrappy Scranton, Pa., the running back who always heeded his dad's advice to bounce back up whenever he got knocked down. Biden knows what folks are going through. Just ask him. "Half the time, my nose was in that grass. You know what I mean?" he says at yet another high-school-practice drop-by.

Does he go too far sometimes? Did his ma call him Joey? Of course he goes too far. Along with the familiar Washington mix of neediness and overconfidence, Biden's brain is wired for more than the



## JOE'S WORLD. FROM AMTRAK TO NUNS, WHAT MAKES HIM TICK

usual amount of goofiness. Picture the Vice President of the United States telling a bunch of schoolboys, "When you're playing for the state title, you've got to invite me! Don't pretend you don't know me." Or feigning delight when a woman at a diner threatens to invite him to visit the Walmart where she works. "I'm like a poor relative. I show up if I'm invited," he warns. A woman at a firehouse tells him they share a distant relative, and—surprise!—"If I got the choice of being related to one of you," Biden answers, well, she would be "the one I would pick."

And by going too far, sometimes he becomes reckless, as he did when he promised at an unscheduled stop, "I guarantee you, flat guarantee you, there will be no changes in Social Security. I flat guarantee you." Evidently he had forgotten that his boss offered significant changes to Social Security last year in hopes of getting Republicans to strike a deal on spending and taxes. The heart doesn't trifle with consistency.

There is an old saw in politics about learning to fake sincerity, but Biden has been overdoing it for so long that you have to conclude he's for real. After all, he has been running for federal office since Paul Ryan was in diapers.

That's 40 years of putting himself out there, raw and unscripted, as he showed during a stop at a memorial to victims of the 2007 massacre at Virginia Tech. Asked to reflect, he didn't offer canned remarks on violence or guns or public safety. The scene reminded him, he said, of the loss of his wife and daughter in a 1972 car wreck. "You know, I think of those kids, but I also think of their parents. No child should predecease their parents."

"I remember what it's like—"

Pause.

"It brings back—"

Pause.

"It brings back memories ... that call, out of the blue."

Once more, with feeling. That could be Joe Biden's bumper sticker. Always with feeling, which is just what Obama needs this year.



### SENATE

If the upper chamber of Congress were a cruise ship, Biden would be social director



### FIREFIGHTERS

They rescued his sons from the 1972 wreck that killed his wife and daughter



### PARENTS

When little Joey got beaten up, Ma sent him back with orders to bloody the guy's nose



### AMTRAK

He commutes by train from Delaware, and every employee is a friend—even the ones he hasn't met yet



### SCRANTON

This blue collar town in northeastern Pennsylvania is the soil in which Biden is still rooted



### FOOTBALL

It's where he learned the secret to life: when you get knocked down, get up again



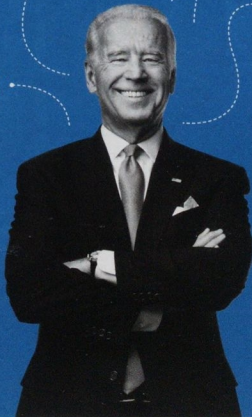
### SISTER

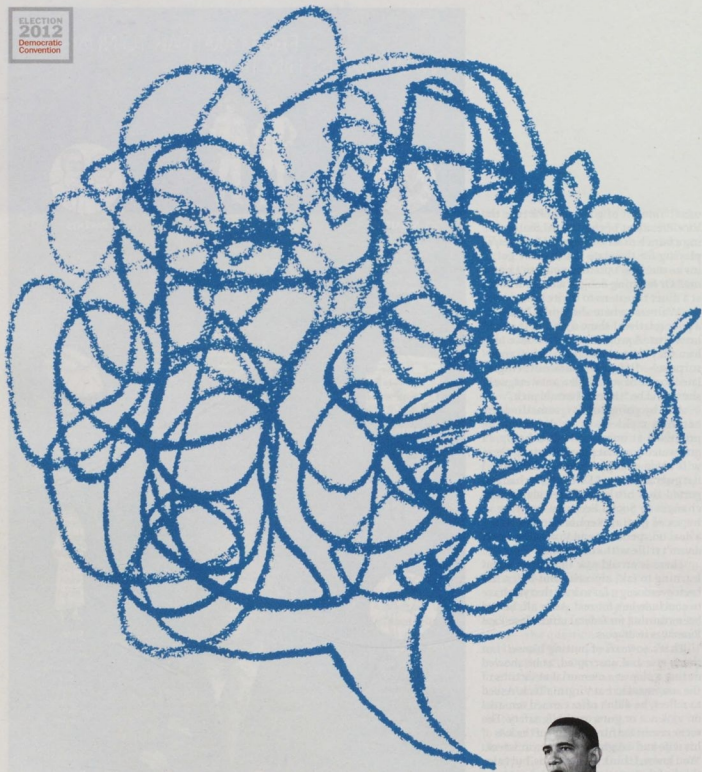
Valerie may be his best friend, and no one's better at translating him into English



### NUNS

In Iowa the lifelong Catholic likes to take ice cream and cookies to the nuns of Dubuque





# WHY CHANGE WON'T SELL

OBAMA'S ACTIONS  
AVERTED A DEPRESSION.  
SO HOW COME THEY  
GET NO RESPECT?

BY MICHAEL GRUNWALD

ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER MUNDAY FOR TIME

# TWO WEEKS INTO HIS PRESIDENCY,

Barack Obama was already losing control of his narrative. Before he took office, the public supported his economic recovery plan, 64% to 19%; now the public opposed it, 52% to 38%. Republicans who embraced stimulus under President Bush were shredding Obama's stimulus as socialism. Somehow, they had steered the debate toward sod on the Mall, condoms and other spending Obama had stripped from the stimulus, plus Mob museums, levitating trains to Disneyland and other nonsense that was never in the bill. The new President had a reputation as a great communicator, but he was clearly failing to communicate.

On Feb. 3, 2009, he summoned the anchors from all five major television networks to the Oval Office for one-on-one interviews. This would be his chance to pitch his plan to the people, to explain how the stimulus would create 3 million jobs in the short run while advancing his priorities in energy, health care, education and the economy for the long run. But that morning, his nominee for Secretary of Health and Human Services, Washington power broker Tom Daschle, withdrew because of unpaid taxes. So the interviews were all about the botched nomination. "That was a key moment," Obama's then legislative director, Phil Schilero, says. "He didn't get to rebut all the false information out there." The big news that day was Obama's take on the Daschle snafu: "I screwed up."

Three and a half years later, there's a sense even among Democrats—especially among Democrats—that Obama has screwed up his message. He's done big things. He's made big progress on his

2008 campaign policy agenda. But there's a widespread feeling that the change he promised on the trail never happened once he got to Washington, and his supporters tend to blame his salesmanship.

The much mocked stimulus is the best example of the problems Obama has marketing his achievements. The top economic forecasters agree that it helped prevent a depression and end a recession, but a year after he signed the bill, the percentage of Americans who believed it created jobs was lower than the percentage who believed Elvis was alive. The stimulus was also a delivery device for Obama's agenda of change. It invested \$90 billion in clean energy when the U.S. had been spending only a few billion a year; it launched Race to the Top, a landmark education-reform program; and it included the biggest infrastructure push since Eisenhower's, the biggest middle-class tax cuts since Reagan's and the biggest new research investments ever. But hardly anyone knows any of that.

Why not?

## THE GIFT BAG

ONE PRIMARY CAUSE OF MISUNDERSTANDINGS about the stimulus was what Obama's then chief of staff, Rahm Emanuel, called the "gift bag" of dismal economic indicators the President inherited from Bush. No stimulus could have produced a rapid turnaround from the financial meltdown, and there was no easy way to promote a jobs bill when jobs were vanishing. The U.S. economy shrank at an 8.9% annual

rate in the fourth quarter of 2008. That's depression territory. After the President-elect's first meeting in December 2008 with his economic aides, who bluntly declared that the economy was falling off a cliff, top political aide David Axelrod told Obama he already knew three things: Their poll numbers weren't going to stay so high. All of the team's geniuses were going to start looking like idiots. And they were going to have a brutal midterm election. "We didn't create this problem," Axelrod warned, "but we'll be held accountable for it."

Politically, Obama had an even bigger problem in early 2009: Americans weren't yet feeling much pain. The financial earthquake had struck, but the economic tsunami had yet to reach shore. Larry Summers, then Obama's top economist, mused that FDR was lucky; the U.S. had suffered through three years of depression before he took office, so everyone knew it was Herbert Hoover's fault.

Obama took office with the economy in free fall, shedding 800,000 jobs that January. The stimulus passed in February, and the next quarter saw the biggest jobs improvement in 30 years. But way better than hideous was still bad, and the jobless rate, a so-called lagging indicator, kept rising toward double digits. Obama's economists also gifted his critics with a politically disastrous report predicting the stimulus would keep unemployment below 8%; it soared above 8% before the stimulus even kicked into gear, which clearly wasn't the fault of the stimulus, but nobody remembers that. The report was also cluttered with caveats, but nobody remembers that either.

Anyway, the Keynesian idea that the public sector needs to create demand by injecting cash into the economy during downturns is an inherently hard political sell when families and businesses are tightening their belts. White House political hands like then vice-presidential chief of staff Ron Klain recognized that after Bush's unpopular bank bailout, the public would be skeptical about throwing more borrowed cash at the problem. "This is going to be a tough thing to message," Klain warned Summers.



Summers shrugged. "We have to do what we have to do," he replied.

Wonk-driven policies sometimes translate into daft politics, as with Obama's Making Work Pay tax rebates for 95% of U.S. workers. Bush had sent out similar rebates through fat checks, but Obama's economists persuaded him that it would be better stimulus to dribble out his tax cuts a few dollars a week through reduced withholding because studies suggest we're more likely to spend a windfall when we don't notice it. But politics is about getting things noticed. Emanuel protested that "we're denying ourselves an Ed McMahon moment," the squeal of Publishers Clearing House pleasure that would greet an envelope from Obama. Ultimately, less than 10% of Americans realized that Obama had cut their taxes. As Klain put it, "The political theory was, if you do the right thing and you get results, that's good politics.... In retrospect, it just seems stupid."

While the President has admitted that he didn't pay enough attention to messaging, that wasn't the whole problem. His message was also muddled. "We just couldn't get our story straight," one senior Obama aide recalls.

## A DEEDS GUY, NOT A WORDS GUY

THAT STORY WAS ABOUT SAVING THE ECONOMY at the time but also transforming the economy for the future, tax cuts but also spending, stimulus today and fiscal rectitude tomorrow. The Republican story was simpler: No. And Democrats focused on their own complaints about the stimulus—too small, too many tax cuts, etc.—which helped reinforce the GOP message that the law was a mess. Even Obama kept saying it wasn't perfect. And after two years of campaigning, his marketing team was off its game. "We were all so emotionally and physically exhausted," recalls Dan Pfeiffer, Obama's communications director. "You run a marathon, you feel like a total zombie, and then you have to do an all-out 800-yard sprint... The phone starts ringing and you don't know where the bathroom is and, oh, by the way, the market might drop



**Lost in translation** Emanuel wanted Obama to talk about jobs, but other issues intervened

3,000 points if the Recovery Act doesn't pass. You're not having the strategic discussions you'd have if there was time to think."

Inside the White House, Axelrod favored a pessimistic message, emphasizing the long road ahead to lower expectations. But Summers urged Obama to accentuate the positive to boost consumer and business confidence. So the President did both. Meanwhile, Emanuel wanted Obama to talk about jobs, jobs, jobs so Americans would see he was focused on reviving the economy. But Vice President Joe Biden thought "numbering jobs" was a fruitless message during a free fall and pushed for broader themes about transforming the economy. Again, the President did both.

Ultimately, the stimulus drove all kinds of change. It doubled production of wind and solar power, jump-started a smart grid and created a domestic battery industry for electric vehicles. It began dragging our pen-and-paper health care system into the digital era and modernized the New Deal-era unemployment-insurance system. But it didn't change the way politics is practiced in Washington, including the pettiness and nastiness that Obama had promised to transcend. With Republicans refusing to cooperate during an emergency, Obama didn't try to reinvent Beltway culture; he focused instead on rounding up 60 votes in the Senate, serving notice that after campaigning as a change-the-system outsider, he would govern as a work-the-system insider.

The GOP strategy of No complicated his message. It made him look like a partisan promise breaker and the stimulus like

Washington status quo. The inside game of legislative sausage-making is always messy, and the tyranny of needing 60 Senate votes to pass anything required uncomfortable compromises. "Rahm must have cut 14,000 deals," an Obama aide recalls. "You can't win messaging like that." And once the stimulus bill was signed, Obama moved on to bailing out the auto industry, stabilizing the financial industry and reforming health care. But the Republican message never wavered: Big Government, big spending, where are the jobs? Emanuel joked that Obama passed the stimulus too quickly, before voters got a sense that jobs were his top priority. In any case, Pfeiffer argues, no message or slogan can counteract double-digit unemployment. And leaders rarely get credit for preventing worse outcomes.

The rap on Obama in 2008 was that he was a words guy. He has turned out to be a deeds guy, dragging the stimulus, Obama-care and financial reform into law, inspiring virtually nobody in the process. So what happened to the words guy? He doesn't talk much about change these days. He no longer utters the word *stimulus*. As he once told his economic team, "I get the Keynesian thing, but it's not where the electorate is." He hasn't really made a robust case for his other accomplishments either, focusing on his plans for the future while portraying Mitt Romney's plans as Bush redux. For a brief period in 2009, he began describing his program as a "new foundation" for a sustainable postbubble economy, but that theme quickly faded.

Cynical Republicans, ungrateful Democrats, lazy reporters and the gift bag of dismal economic indicators all helped muddle his message. But it was up to Obama to make the case. A friendly Congressman once warned him, "The stimulus is great, but you're not selling it. 'I know exactly what you're saying,' Obama replied. "And you're exactly right." —WITH REPORTING BY WALTER ALARKON ■



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This tank slip  
is one of more  
than 200 Spanx  
products

# THE NEW SHAPE OF RETAIL

Spanx's fun, stylish shapewear is a runaway hit. What next? While traditional retailers scramble to get online, Spanx is opening its own stores. As other high-end, high-concept fashion brands have discovered, there is no substitute for the touch and feel of brick and mortar

BY FEIFEI SUN

**S**ARA BLAKELY UNDERSTANDS the power of show-and-tell. The inventor of Spanx shape-wear and founder of the company that sells it, Blakely recalls pitching her first product, a pair of slimming, footless pantyhose designed to be invisible even under a pair of pants. A cold call to Neiman Marcus in 2000 got her a meeting, but after five minutes the buyer started to lose interest. Blakely ditched the prepared pitch and moved the meeting into the bathroom. There she changed into a pair of ill-fitting cream pants and pointed to the resulting lumps, bulges and panty lines. She modeled them again—this time with Spanx underneath—and closed the deal, no explanation necessary. Neiman Marcus promptly began selling Spanx.

This is the emotional experience—a beauty secret shared between friends in a ladies' room—that Blakely, 41, hopes to replicate with her company's first standalone retail store. Spanx plans to open its first three outlets in October at destination malls in Tysons Corner, Va., Paramus, N.J., and King of Prussia, Pa. While many other retailers are scrambling to transform their brick-and-mortar businesses into online empires, Blakely is doing just the opposite. After first selling Spanx in high-end department stores like Neiman Marcus, the company expanded quickly. The brand is now sold at nearly 12,000 retailers worldwide, from Europe to Australia. Spanx moved online in 2000, when the footless tights appeared on Oprah Winfrey's annual list of her favorite things. (Blakely quickly set up a website to handle the post-Oprah windfall.) Online sales of Spanx



**Shape shifter** Blakely, 41, invented Spanx and launched the company with a \$5,000 investment

products have been "robust," according to CEO Laurie Ann Goldman, but the bulk of the company's sales still happen in stores. "Our business is all about emotion—this feeling of women coming together, being honest about the help they might need and knowing we're all in this together," Blakely says. "When you're doing everything online, you miss a lot of that connection."

Camaraderie and female support are woven into the corporate culture at Spanx. The walls of its Atlanta headquarters are painted hot pink, and Dolly Parton's "9 to 5" blasts in the background, making

it feel more like a sorority house than a corporate office. (Blakely was a member of Delta Delta Delta at Florida State University.) Blakely says customers can expect this same "You go, girl!" aesthetic at the Spanx brick-and-mortar stores. Some of the features are gimmicky, like an interactive "affirmation station" at which customers can hear positive catchphrases from Sunny, the cartoon doppelganger of Blakely that adorns Spanx's packaging. Blakely is serious, though, about training salespeople and making sure they can give customers firsthand advice about the products. "This is definitely a girlfriend-to-girlfriend business, and these stores are going to be a place where you can go and the sales associates know your name and your bra size," she says.

Marshal Cohen, a retail analyst for the NPD Group, says this messaging strategy is Spanx's biggest advantage over its competitors. It may have reinvented shapewear—turning the embarrassing experience of wearing a girdle into something that celebrities happily discuss on the red carpet—but rivals were quick to catch on. Spanx is still the category leader, but as the shapewear industry has grown—tripling over the past decade to more than \$750 million—the company has lost some market share to competitors that already have a strong in-store presence, like Maidenform, American Eagle and Victoria's Secret.

So Spanx is doing more of what it does best—and building stores to showcase it. "The core of Spanx has always been about shapewear, but with a bit of whimsy," says Catherine Moellering, executive

## 1998

A pair of poorly fitting cream pants inspires the first product: footless tights



The original is still one of Spanx's best sellers

## 2000

Oprah Winfrey names Spanx one of her favorite things



Blakely quit her job soon after Oprah called

## 2000

Spanx enters high-end retail when Neiman Marcus agrees to carry the product in seven stores



## 2004

Gwyneth Paltrow name-checks Spanx in a *USA Today* interview as a Hollywood insider's secret



She's wearing two pairs



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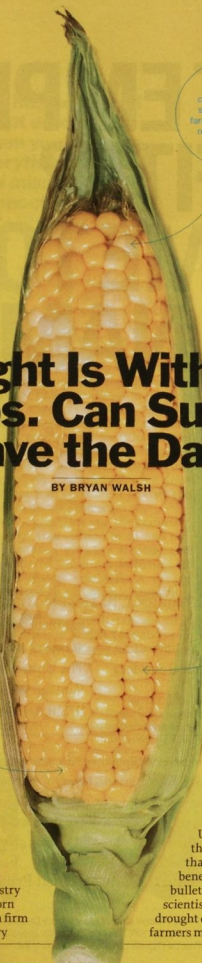
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Because the corn from hybrid seeds is sterile, farmers have to buy new seeds each season.

# Drought Is Withering U.S. Crops. Can Superseeds Save the Day?

BY BRYAN WALSH

ALL FARMERS KNOW THEY'LL HAVE TO endure the occasional dry period, but what has happened to the American Midwest this summer has been practically biblical. By the end of July, over 60% of the U.S. was experiencing some form of drought—the most in more than half a century. Corn yields fell by at least 16%, and prices rose to record highs as farmers confronted fields of dust. Scariest of all, the drought of 2012, which could eventually cost as much as \$18 billion, may be just a taste of what's to come in a hotter, drier future.

The global seed market hit \$41 billion in 2011. It could grow to \$58 billion by 2016, with one-third of all seeds involving some form of GM.

Farmers and crop companies are struggling to figure out ways to cope with severe drought. Changing the weather is still beyond us, but what if there were a way to breed crops that could use water more efficiently, thriving even in times of drought?

That's what agribusiness is hoping to achieve with new genetically modified (GM) crop strains that are designed to endure arid conditions. Industry leader Monsanto is working on a hybrid line of corn called DroughtGard, developed with the German firm BASF, that is designed to enhance crop yield in dry

Improved farming methods and non-GM breeding have increased the drought tolerance of corn by 1% a year over the past few decades.

soils. It is the first U.S. Department of Agriculture-approved GM crop to focus on drought tolerance and features a

bacterial gene that enables it to better retain water. Hundreds of farmers in the western end of the Corn Belt—an area that runs to dry even in normal years—are field-testing DroughtGard, and Monsanto says early results indicate that the GM crop might improve yields by 4% to 8% over conventional crops in some arid conditions. "This year magnifies how important it is to have drought tolerance," says Robert Fraley, Monsanto's chief technology officer.

Still, critics are skeptical that GM crops alone will enable farmers to overcome persistent drought. In a June report, the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS) noted that GM crops take years to develop and that the seeds created so far offer only modest benefit. "Genetic engineering is not a silver bullet," says Doug Gurian Sherman, a senior scientist at UCS and the author of the report. If the drought of 2012 really does become the norm, though, farmers may need all the bullets they can get.





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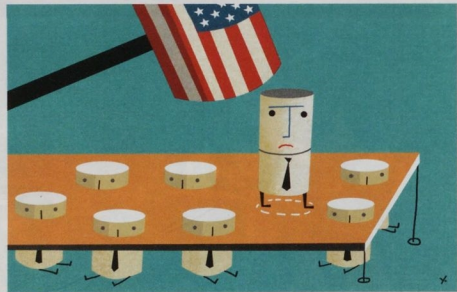
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## Too Good for Government

Two bureaucrats fought the system—and paid the price



CLAIRE BROID JOHNSON WAS THE KIND of private-sector go-getter you don't expect to find in middle management at a federal agency. After graduating from Harvard and Harvard Business School, then structuring energy deals for major banks and other corporations, she helped found the pathbreaking solar firm SunEdison. But in 2009, inspired by President Obama's hopey-changey rhetoric, she joined the Energy Department. In 2010, when its Office of Weatherization and Intergovernmental Programs (OWIP) was flatlining, she was assigned to defibrillate it.

Since it's almost impossible to fire civil servants, Bush Administration energy officials had stockpiled stiffies at OWIP, hoping to get rid of them en masse by killing the so-called Turkey Farm or slashing its \$300 million budget. But the Obama stimulus law gave OWIP \$11.3 billion for low-income home weatherization and other energy-efficiency programs—a mind-boggling sum the agency couldn't handle. The result was paralysis. California was supposed to weatherize 2,500 homes a month to save residents electricity and money; in 2009 it finished 12.

Johnson wasn't much of a diplomat,

but she had brains, business chops and a bull-in-a-china-shop mentality. "She was like a hurricane hitting the building," recalled one colleague I interviewed for my new book, *The New New Deal*. Johnson launched military-style programs like Operation GreenLight to cut red tape and a "SWAT team" to pressure slowpokes. Predictably, she ruffled feathers at the Turkey Farm. One lifer buried his nose in a newspaper whenever she approached; another filed a grievance after she chastised him for napping on the job. She devised a secret Operation Cupcake to try to fire the laggards, but the civil-service cupcakes knew political appointees come and go. They called themselves WeBes, as in We be here, you be gone.

Meanwhile, another private-sector refugee was driving change at another public-sector backwater, the General Services Administration. GSA received \$5.5 billion in stimulus cash for federal green-building projects, and public building commissioner Bob Peck, a well-respected real estate executive, saw the windfall as the agency's moon shot. He helped install a "speed dating" program to negotiate small contracts with minimal review. He used GSA projects to beta-

test brand-new energy-saving approaches and build demand for emerging technologies like LED lighting and geothermal heat pumps. And as Peck explains, going green isn't just about high-tech bling. A renovation of the GSA headquarters will accommodate thousands more employees, saving \$20 million a year on leases for spillover office space as well as utility bills. It will be greener in the same way dense cities are greener than sprawling suburbs. When I visited, Peck had moved four staffers into his 800-sq.-ft. McMansion of an office. "Who needs all that territory?" he asked. "We're not Neanderthals anymore."

Many of Peck's real estate innovations became standard federal practice. Johnson's in-your-face management ramped up the weatherization rate from 30,000 homes a year to 30,000 homes a month. They both fought the system and won.

But then they lost. Johnson's enemies leaked e-mails to the inspector general that revealed she violated procedures to fast-track the hiring of a deputy. "The HR process is just too slow," she had written. "I need competent bodies now who can help." For the crime of trying to whip an incompetent bureaucracy into shape without jumping through every required hoop, she was forced to resign. "If I had kept my head down, I wouldn't have gotten in trouble," she says. "But I wouldn't have gotten anything done."

Peck was also forced to resign, for being the highest-ranking official to attend an over-the-top taxpayer-funded GSA conference in Las Vegas that featured a psychic and a clown. He didn't set up the conference, but this kind of Washington scandal demands ritual sacrifice. "There's a zero-defect mentality," Peck says. "People say they want government run like a business, but obviously they don't."

Johnson and Peck will be fine. She's an executive for an energy-efficiency firm. He's back in private real estate. It's the country that will suffer for Washington's stay-the-course culture. As long as government chews up people who drive change, it will attract people who embrace the status quo. ■

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Cat Power is back  
with new music after  
a bad breakup

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# The Culture

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Photograph by Ryan Pfluger for TIME

# Pop Chart



TAYLOR SWIFT EDITION

## GOOD WEEK/ BAD WEEK

### Smash Single

Swift's "We Are Never Ever Getting Back Together" hit No. 1 on the *Billboard* Hot 100

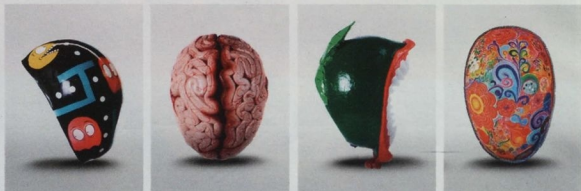
### Social Misstep

Boyfriend Conor Kennedy, 18, brought her to a family wedding—reportedly without an invite



## BRANDING Soul Food

File under "We can't believe it took this long." Capitalizing on the success of its self-help books, the *Chicken Soup for the Soul* brand is going to launch a line of actual comfort food, including casseroles, potpies, gravies and soups (starting with chicken, of course). Your move, *Fruit of the Loom*.



The decorative hood on this São Paulo pay phone is designed to curb vandalism

**CALL US, DEFINITELY** Are pay phones passé? Not in Brazil. As part of a public-art initiative, São Paulo tapped 100 local artists to transform 100 phone hoods into bees, brains, disco balls and more. Call Parade, as the program is named, is modeled after similar art programs in Chicago (decorative cows) and Istanbul (decorative shoes), among other cities.

## QUICK TALK

### Kevin Hart

"I'm not nervous in any way, shape or form," says *Think Like a Man* star Kevin Hart, who's prepping to host the MTV Video Music Awards (airing Sept. 6 at 8 p.m.)—easily the biggest gig of his career. The 33-year-old comedian yuks it up with *TIME*.

—DAN MACSAI

The last VMA host, Chelsea Handler, descended from the ceiling with a giant sparkly house on her head, mocking Lady Gaga. How are you going to top that entrance? I'm a comedian, so to me, the entrance has to be closer to what I do on a consistent basis. It's definitely going to be an introduction, but I want to make it funny, make it different, make it pop. **So no ceiling?** Don't look



too hard to the ceiling for me to come down. **Daniel Tosh recently caught flak for doing a bit about rape. Are there any topics you won't joke about?** Uh, yes. Rape. Rape would be one of them. I also steer clear of homosexuality or anything dealing with that right now, because it's such a sensitive topic in today's times. There's words I've used in the past that I wouldn't use now because of the attention those words get. **But celebrities are fair game?** Of course. At the end of the day, it's all in fun. I'm not doing anything to intentionally hurt people or come at people the wrong way. **Who are you most excited to see?** Dude, that's unfair. I'm a fan of so many. I can say Rihanna. I can say Chris Brown. I can say Drake. I can say Taylor Swift. I can say Green Day. **That's everyone, basically.** There you go. You said the one word I should have chosen to say at the beginning.

## FEUDS

### Pop vs. Politics

When Twisted Sister demanded that VP hopeful Paul Ryan stop playing "We're Not Gonna Take It Anymore" at campaign rallies, it was the latest in a series of time-honored clashes between (mostly) liberal rock stars and conservative politicians trying to exploit their musical messaging. Here we relive a few of our favorites.

Bruce Springsteen



1984

VS.



Ronald Reagan

Reagan tried to tap "Born in the U.S.A." mania, but the Boss shut him down

Sam Moore



2008

VS.



Barack Obama

The soul artist asked the presidential front runner to stop playing "Hold On! I'm Comin'."



## BEAUTIFUL DISASTER

Israeli artist Ori Gersht is known for setting up gorgeous, tranquil scenes—and then blowing them up in super-slow-motion. (See: this still from his “Pomegranate” video, one of several on view at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts through Jan. 6.) He says his goal is to fuse the sublime and the savage, reinventing classic still lifes for the modern era. And also, probably, to have fun shooting fruit.



## LORENZO DOMINIC LAVALLE

After almost nine months of animal-print maternity wear, *Jersey Shore* star Snooki—who once described herself as “a pregnant whale”—welcomed a son with fiancé Jonni LaValle. Only time will tell if he’ll fist pump as well as his parents.

## WINNOVATION A Real-Life Hovercraft

Anyone who has ever watched *Back to the Future* or *The Jetsons* knows we’re long overdue for flying cars. Good thing that engineers at California-based Aeroflex just successfully tested the next best thing: a hoverbike that taps powerful fans, among other tools, to let riders cruise aboveground. Somewhere, Doc Brown is shouting “Eureka!”



## 3 THINGS YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THIS WEEK

### 1. The proper spelling of lolz.

The latest update to the Oxford Dictionaries Online, the hip young cousin of the OED, also includes photobomb, ridic and lifecasting. Pretty kewl, rite?

### 2. Eating dangerous candy.

Red Vines has recalled some 1-lb. bags of its black licorice, which contained triple the amount of lead allowed by the FDA.

### 3. Will.I.am's intergalactic popularity.

With help from NASA's Curiosity rover, the Black Eyed Peas front man streamed his new single from Mars.

Tom Petty



VS.



Michele Bachmann

2011

The liberal crooner issued a cease-and-desist order after Bachmann played “American Girl” at a rally

Silversun Pickups



VS.



Mitt Romney

2012

The alt-rock group didn't want the Romney campaign using “Panic Switch” at events

Rage Against the Machine



VS.



Paul Ryan

2012

Ryan's fandom prompted front man Tom Morello to call him “the embodiment” of what he rages against



# The Voice Cat Power is back with a new album that shines

By Doug Wolk

COMING-OF-AGE STORIES ABOUT ARTISTS, especially female artists, often center on how someone "found her voice." Chan Marshall has been performing under the name Cat Power for more than half her life, and her voice has always been her most powerful asset; she never lost it and never had to find it. A soft-edged, smoky alto with a Georgia accent, it's both the surface and the skeleton of the indie rocker's album *Sun* (out Sept. 4). It's layered deep on every track, as melody, harmony, texture and sometimes even rhythm.

At 40, Marshall—whose biggest mainstream impact has been with her mournful, stripped-down covers of oldies like "Sea of Love"—is releasing her first album of original material in six years. "When I was little," she said recently when I caught up with her in Miami, "I was singing all these different songs, but I never heard myself sing words that I had made up. I didn't know how to sing them because they'd never been sung before." She paused. "Are you mad at me?"

Marshall, despite her charisma and almost cultlike following, asks everyone if they're mad at her. She apologizes more than anyone else I've ever met. (Full disclosure: I met Chan—pronounced Shawn—in 1993 and helped a few of her friends put out Cat Power's first single.) Some people are unstoppable fonts of creativity, driven to follow their impulses and present their art to an audience. Others are paralyzed by self-awareness. Marshall is both. But she stands up to her overwhelming self-doubt and makes

the work she needs to make anyway.

In the mid-'90s, Cat Power's live shows were famously inconsistent. Sometimes Marshall would unleash a set of devastating new material—urgent, heartbroken songs like "Nude as the News" and "Metal Heart." Sometimes she'd play with her back to the audience or run offstage crying or ramble through a string of song fragments. Her records, though, were knockouts. Cat Power's fan base grew within the independent-rock scene, then beyond it in 2000 with *The Covers Record*, a set of exquisite reinterpretations of songs including the Rolling Stones' "Satisfaction," which she played as a minor-key meditation without its signature riff or chorus, and the Velvet Underground's "I Found a Reason," which subsequently turned up in a few movies.

Her voice and presence caught the attention of Karl Lagerfeld, which led to a gig modeling jewelry for Chanel. She posed for Richard Avedon. She could count Eddie Vedder and Dave Grohl as fans and collaborators. Her career hit a speed bump in 2006, when she spent a week in a psychiatric ward and canceled a tour to support her seventh album, *The Greatest*. But when she returned to

the stage a few months later, her performances were triumphant. She'd gotten more comfortable with being in front of an audience, or at least learned to deal with her discomfort.

After a breakup this year with a longtime boyfriend whose name she's careful not to mention (although it's not much of a secret that it's actor Giovanni Ribisi), Marshall chopped off most of her long, brown hair and bleached the rest for a video she directed for *Sun*'s opener, "Cherokee." She could easily have gone on making the melancholy, restrained rock records her fans have come to expect. Instead she's been teaching herself to work with samples, loops, electronic instruments and Auto-Tune. *Sun* reflects the sound of contemporary pop more than anything she's done before. "I didn't want to rely so much on guitar or piano for this record," she says. "I needed to challenge myself."

As always, she can be completely on her own wavelength. One song on *Sun*, "Silent Machine," which she wrote 15 years ago, is a creepy digital stomp-and-stutter inspired by a dream in which she saw a vision of children in Tibet "lying on a basketball court, in cocoons, with ropes tied

**Sometimes she'd play with her back to the audience or run offstage crying or ramble through a string of song fragments**



Chan Marshall, a.k.a. Cat Power, has a new album—her first of original material in six years—and a new hairstyle. She recently chopped off her long hair and signature bangs



around their heads to keep them quiet." The imagery is hard to follow, as is her response to my softball question about what advice 40-year-old Marshall would offer the 19-year-old version of herself. Her long, earnest answer touches on the pyramids at Giza, spirit animals, theology and our solar system's planets' being "silent portions of the table of contents."

Still, she seems more relaxed and happier than I ever saw her in the '90s. In particular, she's happy that *Sun*—a title she's had in mind since 1999—is finally done. After a few false starts, she ended up producing and playing nearly the whole album by herself. Halfway through it, we hear the first sound on the album that's clearly not coming from Chan herself: the commanding bellow of punk-rock godfather Iggy Pop on the riveting, nearly 11-minute-long "Nothin' but Time." Marshall says she wrote it for a young girl who was being plagued by online bullying, and in it she sings, "It's up to you/ To be a superhero/ It's up to you/ To be like nobody." Iggy joins her on the refrain, which might as well be a manifesto: "The world is just beginning." ■



# Books

## War Stories. Three novels offer very different views on the conflict in Iraq

By Jim Frederick

IT'S HARD TO ARGUE THAT WARFARE HAS any redeeming qualities, but here's one: armed conflict is among mankind's most reliable crucibles for creating high art. Western literature begins with a war story—*The Iliad*—and plenty of gifted writers since then have salvaged meaning out of carnage, capturing the pathos unique to particular wars while exploring universal truths about the soul.

So far not only have there been very few good novels about the U.S.'s wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, there have been very few novels about them at all. Writing in the *Guardian* about the comparative surfeit of outstanding nonfiction regarding those conflicts, British author Geoff Dyer notes that war fiction seems to require a longer gestation. *All Quiet on the Western Front* debuted 11 years after Armistice Day, and Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* trailed V-E day by 16 years. We may be in for a long wait before any novel about Iraq or Afghanistan approaches the poignancy that Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried* brought to the Vietnam War; that collection of stories was published 17 years after the last U.S. troops left Vietnam.

The first serious contenders about the Iraq war are starting to make their way into bookstores. *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk*, a first-rate piece of satire by Ben Fountain, follows 19-year-old Private Billy Lynn and his seven squadmates, whose valor during a battle in Iraq has catapulted them to fame and earned them a two-week morale-building tour across the U.S. The book focuses on the final day of the tour, when they are set to appear at the halftime show of a Dallas Cowboys game on Thanksgiving Day.

By not setting the action in Iraq and instead plopping his protagonists—soldiers who are both battle-wise and world-naïve—into the gaudy, swirling, high-rococo heart of the American sports/entertainment/consumption/self-congratulation industry, Fountain, an award-winning short-story writer, cuts quickly to the theme of the book: just

how little American society knows (or wants to know) about the troops it claims to venerate and the wars it calls on them to fight. "No one spits, no one calls him baby-killer," Fountain writes. "On the contrary, people could not be more supportive or kindlier disposed, yet Billy finds these encounters weird and frightening all the same." As their only point of contact for a war that's omnipresent yet impossibly remote, the squad's half-crazed admirers heap upon the soldiers every bit of fear and guilt the conflict has aroused in the country itself.

Lynn and his squadmates wander through their day, suffering a series of boozy misadventures while worrying about what they're supposed to do at their Texas Stadium appearance. All the while, they are assaulted by well-wishers who lavish the soldiers with platitudes designed to make themselves, not the troops, feel better. The most satisfying scenes occur when the squad refuses to play along with the charade, confronting its admirers with the reality of what infantrymen do. When a friend of one of the Cowboys owners offers the squad a standard palliative about the pity of war, Lynn's squad leader interrupts, "That's not it at all! We like violence, we like going lethal ... This is the most murdering bunch of psychopaths you'll ever see."

In *Fobbit*, David Abrams also chooses satire as his medium, but he has trained his sights more squarely on the U.S. Army as an institution. A retired veteran

whose 20-year career in the Army included a 2005 tour in Baghdad, Abrams is comfortable and convincing locating the action in Iraq. The term *fobbit* is derisive slang for the noncombat troops who spend the majority of their time huddled in mega-facilities the Army calls forward operating bases. The largest FOBs are not unlike small U.S. cities, with swimming pools, fitness centers and parking lots filled with unarmored SUVs parked in front of Burger Kings, Subways and coffee bars.

*Fobbit* is a vicious skewering of this surprisingly large military subculture of war avoidance. The book's main character is Staff Sergeant Chance Gooding, a public-affairs officer—the most fobbit variety of fobbit there is. And as with the ensemble casts that populate *M\*A\*S\*H* and *Catch-22*, Gooding is joined by a buffoonish collection of co-workers whose individual cravenness is trumped only by the more monstrous absurdity and hypocrisy that pervade the war. Gooding spends most of his time crafting press releases that say as little as possible, and his department's greatest challenge comes when the war's 2,000th fallen service

### BATTLEFIELD BOOKS

*Fobbit* by David Abrams; *The Yellow Birds* by Kevin Powers; *Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* by Ben Fountain





member turns out not to have been a battlefield hero but an incompetent former company commander who'd been recently demoted to towel boy at one of the FOB's fitness centers.

Army bureaucracy is a fat target, but while there is much to enjoy in *Fobbit*, it doesn't come close to matching *Catch-22*. Even at their crudest, the best satires still have heart, but everybody in *Fobbit* is heartless: "Crack open their chests and in the space where their hearts should be beating with a warrior's courage and selfless regard, you'd find a pale, gooney center," Abrams writes. *Fobbit*'s relentless contempt for everything and everyone makes the book a sour and dispiriting read.

Kevin Powers' *The Yellow Birds* takes an approach diametrically opposed to that of *Billy Lynn* and *Fobbit*. Like Abrams, Powers is an Army vet but with extensive combat experience in Iraq—and it shows. No satirical romp, *The Yellow Birds* is an elegaic, sober and haunting coming-of-age war story. The narrator, Private John Bartle, tells of his friendship with Private Daniel Murphy, their deployment to Iraq in 2004 and its aftermath. Early on, it becomes clear that Murphy is dead

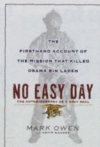
#### Outside the wire

Powers' *The Yellow Birds* describes fictionalized versions of combat-patrol missions like this 2006 house search in southern Baghdad

and Bartle is still plagued by guilt years later. From there, the chapters hop back and forth in time and place, filling in the sources of that guilt. Although Powers' prose can stray into the purple, especially in the first few pages, his writing becomes increasingly sure-handed, striking the ancient battle themes of innocence, loss and remorse.

Powers is honest about how individual, even among brothers in arms, the struggle for survival in a war zone really is. When one of the platoon's translators dies, Bartle feels only gratitude: "War is the maker of great solipsists: how are you going to save my life today? Dying would be one way. If you die, it becomes more likely that I will not."

While history suggests that we may have to wait another decade before we know which novels will define the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, if these three are any measure of what's to come, the competition is going to be fierce.



## No SEAL Of Approval

Even if former Navy SEAL Matt Bissonnette doesn't disclose any secrets in his soon-to-be-published book *No Easy Day: The Firsthand Account of the Mission That Killed Osama bin Laden*, he could still be in legal trouble. That's because Special Ops troops agree to submit anything they write about their military careers to the government before publication. The Pentagon says Bissonnette, writing under the pseudonym Mark Owen, never asked for a prepub scrub.

"When somebody thumbs their nose at an agreement on which access to highly sensitive information was conditioned, the government does have to do something," says Eugene Fidell, a Yale Law School lecturer and former head of the National Institute of Military Justice. "Whether that involves an effort to impose a prior restraint or bringing criminal proceedings is going to be a major policy choice."

SEALs are split over what to do about the book, which is set to hit stores Sept. 4. "It is a life-long commitment," says ex-SEAL Don Mann, who published *Inside SEAL Team Six* after going through a review board. "I was shocked," he says, that Bissonnette flouted the rules.

Others aren't as concerned. Former SEAL Stewart Smith says the recent slew of SEAL books haven't done any real damage because they didn't let out any secrets. "I caught a ration of crap when I got out and developed my first book, *The Complete Guide to Navy SEAL Fitness*," he says. "And all I talked about was the secret of the push-up!" —MARK THOMPSON

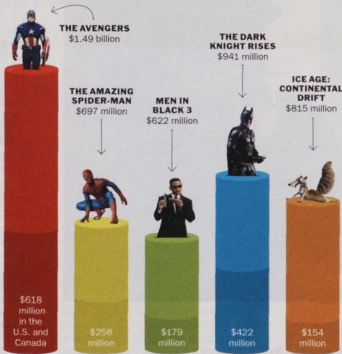
## By Richard Corliss

THE ALL-TIME TOP-EARNING movie not directed by James Cameron (*The Avengers*) and the end of the Batman trilogy (*The Dark Knight Rises*) headlined a so-so box office that will bring in about as much revenue as last summer's. The Olympics and the Aurora, Colo., shootings kept some patrons at home. But since franchises made the big money, expect more of the same next summer.

In a slow season for human comics (just ask Adam Sandler and Sacha Baron Cohen), Seth MacFarlane's raunch-talking *Ted* was a surprise \$200 million-plus domestic smash.



People's choice: four comic-book-based movies and a cartoon\*



\*AS OF AUG. 26, ACCORDING TO BOX OFFICE MOJO

The lead role in *Beasts of the Southern Wild* was written for a much older child. But when director Benh Zeitlin saw Quvenzhane Wallis, then 5, he saw a fierce force of nature. As the bayou girl whom no storm can tame, Wallis could become the youngest actor ever nominated for an Oscar.



Battleship made **\$65 MILLION**  
in North America —



Quotes from TIME's Richard Corliss and Mary Pols

"If the film were a Broadway-bound show, it would have closed out of town." —R.C.

Superhero Showdown  
**THE AVENGERS vs.**  
**THE DARK KNIGHT RISES**



Iron Man and friends soared to No. 3 all-time (after *Titanic* and *Avatar*), leaving Batman and Catwoman in the dark.

Ab-solutely Fabulous  
**MAGIC MIKE vs.  
ROCK OF AGES**



Channing Tatum's taut torso sold nearly triple the tickets Tom Cruise's did, but at 50, Tom still looks terrific.

**Top Indie Film**  
**THE BEST EXOTIC MARIGOLD HOTEL vs. MOONRISE KINGDOM**



It's a tie! Old folks and Wes Anderson fans flocked to these movies, each of which will earn nearly \$50 million.

**Fairy-Tale Face-Off**  
**SNOW WHITE AND THE HUNTSMAN**  
**vs. MIRROR MIRROR**



Charlize Theron defeated Julia Roberts by \$90 million, aided in part by co-star Kristen Stewart of *Twilight* fame



# Education

## Failure Is Not a Bad Option. Resilience helps kids more than high SATs do

By Belinda Luscombe

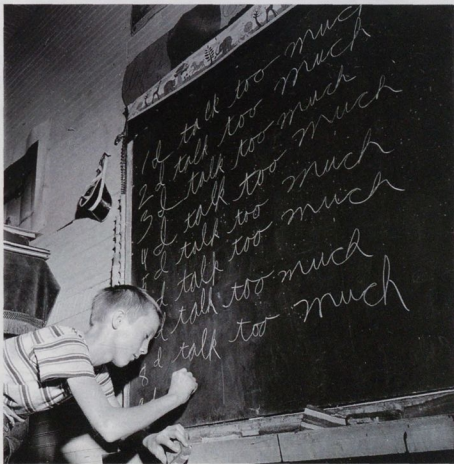
PEOPLE HAVE BEEN RAISING CHILDREN for about 2 million years now. You'd think the enterprise would have lost its novelty. Yet so much drama surrounds the contemporary act of bringing up offspring, with tiger moms squaring off against free-range parents, that it's a wonder we don't all remain childless merely to avoid wading into the fray.

One of the lodestars that parents have followed through all weather is educational achievement. Children who get good grades tend to do well at university and well at life. There's a huge chasm, for example, between the lifetime earnings of college graduates and high school graduates. So, by all means, let's focus on making kids as brainy as possible.

But now there's a trickle of thought that says academic ability may not be as it's cracked up to be. Rather than so much focus on cognitive skills, some heretics suggest, a little more grit is what kids really need.

In Paul Tough's new book, *How Children Succeed*, he suggests that grit is the cornerstone of educational reform, especially in the poor communities he's used to covering as a journalist. His research-laden book argues that while IQ is stubborn to change after age 8, the ability to persist, focus and adapt is more malleable, even into early adulthood. And while IQ may be what gets kids into college, they need a whole other set of skills to graduate. "Not long ago, the United States led the world in producing college graduates," he writes. "Now it leads the world in producing college dropouts."

Tough, himself a college dropout, points to studies that show that a good GPA, even from a lousy high school, is a far better predictor of whether a student will finish college than a high mark on the SATs. Not coincidentally, GPAs reward perseverance, character, time-management skills and



the ability to work well with others.

Although Madeline Levine's recent *Teach Your Children Well* targets the other end of the socioeconomic and child-rearing spectrum, she reaches some of the same conclusions. A family therapist to wealthy Californians, Levine spent years counseling youngsters whose high academic performance had left them mentally, emotionally and sometimes physically frail. Hers is a manual to restore family sanity: less emphasis on grades, more on values, less homework, more sleep, less

fretting by parents, more encouraging.

And what if families can't manage? Can schools teach grit? Tough visits schools for the elite and schools for the impoverished. Both, it turns out, have a problem with failure: the wealthy kids don't see enough of it to learn resilience, and the poor kids see too much of it to learn persistence.

He finds some oases of hope, including a fancy school that's taken its foot off the grades-and-homework gas pedal and teachers in low-income schools who have had success using discipline, habituation and a careful reframing of the way students think and react. He characterizes one extremely successful chess teacher's method as "calibrated meanness." Good marks on tests may be an accurate bellwether of how well a child's life will turn out. But, Tough suggests, an easy A will help kids less than a hard-won B. ■

**Rather than so much focus on cognitive skills, some heretics suggest, a little more grit is what kids really need**

# Adopting the Neediest

**Laying out the welcome mat for unpopular pets—from the blind cat to the black dog—can be the start of a perfect relationship**

P

## RADA IS NOT A PRETTY KITTY

In the traditional sense. Found as a stray and brought to a pet adoption center in Schertz, Texas, the scrawny gray tabby had suffered a face injury that left her with a blind eye, a crooked jaw and sinus issues that made her purrs sound more like snores. Yet something about Prada's gentle nature let Emine Follbaum see through to the lovable family pet within.

"The way Prada looked, you could sense her pain, but you could also tell how precious she was," Follbaum says. "I fell in love and brought her home that day." Prada transitioned beautifully and does not require any special attention, other than "insisting on being kissed and petted," Follbaum says with a laugh.

Adopting a pet is the best way to give a "forever home" to an animal that might otherwise be among the 3 million to 4 million needlessly put to death in the U.S. each year. Since 1995, Petfinder.com, with its network of nearly 14,000 animal welfare organizations, has helped adopt out more than 20 million pets, including Prada. But there's still a vast subset of animals perceived as unadoptable. Pets with black fur, pit bull type dogs, FIV positive cats, blind animals, deaf animals, senior animals—they all too frequently get overlooked.

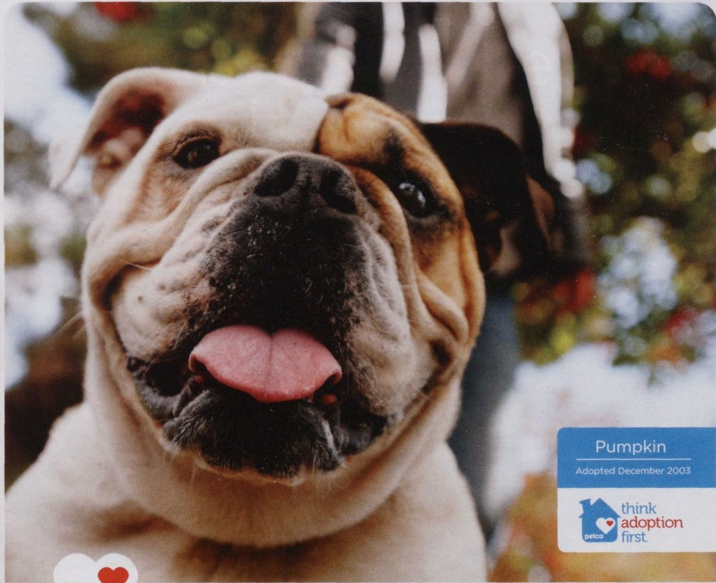
To help raise awareness, Petfinder has designated Sept. 17-23, 2012, as Adopt-A-Less-Adoptable-Pet Week ([Petfinder.com/lessadoptablepetweek](http://Petfinder.com/lessadoptablepetweek)). Now in its third year, the campaign is an opportunity for Petfinder to showcase pets on its website that are con-

sidered hard to adopt. Social media plays an important role, too, as pets are increasingly "promoted" by shelters and foster parents on Facebook and Twitter. Petfinder this month is sharing customizable widgets to broadcast the campaign around the web in order to help pets in need.

"So many wonderful pets in need of homes are passed over because of stereotypes, myths

Home is where the heart is: All breeds of animals are worthy of love including the pitbull type dog and black cat.

Petfinder



Pumpkin

Adopted December 2003



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National Adoption Reunion • October 6-7

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- Share your story with people passionate about pet adoption

Visit [petco.com/adoptions](http://petco.com/adoptions) to find a store near you and learn more about our Think Adoption First Care & Savings program.

\* While supplies last.

**petco**

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**adoption**

**reunion**



and misinformation," says Kim Saunders, Petfinder's vice president of shelter outreach and author of *The Adopted Dog Bible*. "People think they need a special skill set to take care of a deaf pet or, let's say, a pet with a missing limb, but pets like these oftentimes compensate so well, you forget." Deaf dogs, for instance, tend to watch you more. Blind cats listen better, and so on.

Sometimes it is the pet parent who needs to adapt. When Cindy Murphy and her family first spotted Bear, a black Lab/Collie mix, on Petfinder's searchable database, the dog's appearance raised concerns. Big black dogs are among the least likely to find a home. "Bear looked a little scary," Murphy admits. "But once we met him, he almost seemed to say, 'Hey! I can be good for you people!' and he was right." "Scary" old Bear turned out to be a laid-back, TV-watching sweetheart.

"We have in our minds what the 'perfect pet' may look like, but honestly, the perfect pet is one you make the perfect connection with," says Marcie Whichard, Petco's vice president of animal care and education. Lifestyle considerations—whether you're active or have children or space limitations, for example—are just as important in making the right match, she says. "Adorable puppies and kittens are always the first to be adopted, but choosing a senior or offbeat-looking pet might be far better for keeping the pet in the home."

Alexis Menis, an associate at a Petco store in Bay Shore, N.Y., recently won a "pet adoption story" contest held among Petco store associates nationwide. She spotlighted Lily, a beat-up, underfed pit bull that one Petco customer adopted

from the Town of Islip Animal Shelter. Says Menis: "The woman walked into a shelter full of pit bulls and said, 'Give me the dog nobody wants' and walked out with Lily."

## SPECIAL NEEDS

As with all pets, less-adoptable ones require individual attention. Deaf animals may need to learn hand signals. FIV positive cats should be spayed or neutered and receive routine veterinary care like all cats. For animals with behavior problems—

a major reason many pets go unadopted or are returned to shelters—the answer is good training.

"Our pets are our family members, but nobody wants a pet to be chewing, jumping or barking inappropriately," says Caryn Stichler, vice president of marketing at Sergeant's Pet Care Products Inc. Training classes and products like calming collars go a long way toward reducing anxiety, aggression, digging and other common behavior issues, Stichler says. Preventive health care is also essential. "Regular wellness checks, exercise, nutrition aimed at the special needs of your pet, and ongoing parasite and pest control save money and stop bigger problems before they start," Stichler says. "What we do today keeps our pets safe and happy for years to come."

Every animal deserves a forever home, says Petfinder's Saunders, but some pets, like the Pradas and Bears of the world, may require something else: a leap of faith. "If you look beyond appearances, you can make a connection with a pet that lasts a lifetime," says Saunders. "What hard-to-adopt pets require most is our love, and that makes us more special for adopting them." 🐾



Prada, a one-eyed cat, found a loving home in Texas (above). Cindy Murphy, her husband and children say Bear, their recently adopted Lab/Collie mix, is a "laid-back sweetheart."





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\*\* In independent studies comparing the efficacy of the combination of ingredients in Fiproguard® MAX to Frontline® Plus, more fleas and ticks died within the first hour after application of the combination of ingredients in Fiproguard® MAX. This high level of efficacy was maintained throughout the month.

## Joel Stein



## The Right Way to Be Gay

### What I learned partying with both sides of the GOP's most fabulous rivalry

**T**HIS IS PRECISELY WHY REPUBLICANS don't like the gays. As soon as you pay them any attention at all: drama! The Log Cabin Republicans—home to gay conservatives since 1977—now have competition from a splinter group, GOProud, as I learned at the GOP Convention in Tampa. And while neither one wanted to say anything negative about the other, they totally did anyway.

The Log Cabin Republicans' event in Tampa was a very nice lunch at Oyster-catchers, which, despite its name, is not a lesbian bar but an upscale oceanfront seafood restaurant. Older men in suits ate tiny crab cakes and chatted politely. I've seen gayer episodes of *Matlock*.

Clarke Cooper, an Army veteran who worked in the U.N. under President George W. Bush, got the group to participate in the drafting of the party's platform for the first time. It didn't go so well, since the platform said the U.S. can't go to the "peoples of Africa" and impose a "gay rights agenda," like, for example, not executing gay people. Still, Cooper told me that he gets a much warmer reception as a gay man in the conservative community than he does as a conservative in the gay community.

**Almost no one at the Log Cabin lunch** knew about Homocon, the party that GOProud was throwing at 10:30 the next night at the Honey Pot, which, despite its name, is a lesbian bar. Even fewer were invited. That's because GOProud founders Chris Barron and Jimmy LaSalvia quit the Log Cabin Republicans in 2009. They felt their ideas were being ignored, like throwing a party with Ann Coulter, the self-described "right-wing Judy Garland." One of the first things they did was put gay-targeted ads on Bravo making fun of Barney Frank, Barbara Boxer and Nancy Pelosi with a parody of *Real Housewives*.

LaSalvia, who looks like an even tanner, even better-haired, even gayer John Edwards, described the groups' differences starkly: "They say size doesn't matter, but we're bigger." When talking about the Log Cabin members' sex lives, LaSalvia said, "Do you have sex after you're castrated?"

The schism in the gay conservative world is almost exactly the same as the one in the Republican Party between the Tea Party and the Establishment. "We never talk about ourselves as Republicans. We talk about ourselves as conservatives," said Barron. *Homocon* was a negative term used by other gays, so they co-opted it. Instead of fighting with the party for gay causes, they show the party how its causes can also be gay causes: free-market health care would create companies that cater to domestic partners; privatized Social Security would let members of gay couples pass on benefits to each other.

They're also more Tea Party extreme: they teamed up with the Gun Owners of America—which thinks the National Rifle Association is weak on gun freedom—to respond to a 2009 hate-crimes bill with

an amendment to allow concealed weapons so people could defend themselves against hate crimes, and they got Senator John Thune to propose it. Once you get conservatives all excited about hiding guns, they will accidentally admit there are hate crimes.

In Tampa they got mainstream Republicans to agree to be on the invitation to their supergay dance party: Coulter, conservative pundits Mary Matalin and Margaret Hoover, Tea Party Express chair Amy Kremer, and Grover Norquist, the Founder of Americans for Tax Reform. They also had a DJ spinning remixed 1980s songs in front of male and female go-go dancers in half shirts that read **FREEDOM IS FABULOUS**. And disco-ball key chain giveaways. Unlike the Log Cabin Republican lunch, they attracted protesters carrying **GOD HATES FAGS** signs outside. Watching them from the club's balcony, Barron said, "It's like the cherry on the sundae."

**Homocon was the second best party I** went to at the convention. The other was thrown by the liquor lobby at the aquarium. There's nothing more awesomely Republican than eating fish in front of other fish. "Surprise, surprise. The gays throw a good party," Barron said.

Norquist, who is on the GOProud advisory council, attended with his wife to support their Tea Party-like attitude. "The national Log Cabin has been mauled by outside groups, so they said, 'We're actually a group within the Republican Party,' not, 'We're gay conservatives,'" he said. He also told me this wasn't the first gay event—or gay bar—he'd ever been to. In fact, in 2004 the New Orleans Log Cabin Republicans invited him to speak at their morning event. Which he was going to do, despite the fact that he was getting married later that day.

"He forwarded me the invite! He wrote, 'Thoughts?'" said his wife Samah. "I'd be back by 2! The wedding was at 4," he said.

I have no idea which group will win the battle for the heart and soul of the gay Republicans, but I do know whose party I'd rather go to.



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# 10 Questions

Barney Frank's father Sam ran a truck stop. Toohey's Truck Terminal, in New Jersey



## Retiring but not shy, Massachusetts Congressman **Barney Frank** on money, the military and the laws that got away

**You're retiring partly because changes in campaign-finance laws mean you have to raise more money. Isn't money a form of speech?**

No. When you equate money with speech, you're giving some people the right to speak a hundred, a thousand, a million times more than other people. The equality principle gets eroded.

**Why did Wall Street execs give you money even though you tried to impose more-stringent regulations on banks?**

Well, one, they gave me less money in 2010, once it became clear that I was serious with this. Two, some people on Wall Street understand the need for sensible reform.

**How would you respond to critics who say Dodd-Frank has left the banking and financial industries with such uncertainty that the credit markets have locked up?**

That's just nonsense. Credit in the American economy has flowed better than the European economy, where they don't have this bill. Uncertainty is to some extent inevitable, but it is transitional. And part of it is the fault of some who are complaining because they have prolonged it.

**How much of Dodd-Frank do you think can be undone if the Dems lose the Senate?**

Very little, because it's popular. The Republicans in the House have moved on many

occasions to repeal the health bill. But they have made zero efforts to repeal financial reform. What I believe they'll do is try to make it ineffective by appointing people who won't use it and cutting the funding.

**You called Paul Ryan's budget a great scam. Why?**

It's a scam in that it's not motivated by a desire to cut the deficit. People who are for higher military spending and keeping taxes below what would be economically tolerable on the very wealthy are not serious about deficit reduction.

**Your Sustainable Defense Task Force called for a \$960 billion cut in military spending. The President says any more than half that will harm national security. Is he wrong?**

I think the President gets caught up in this cultural lag that a Democrat must show that he's strong on military or he'll lose. There is, unlike the period from 1941 to 1990, no existential threat to our freedom. We continue to spend, for example, unnecessary billions maintaining a full, three-part ability to fight a thermonuclear war with the Soviet Union.

**What one do-over would you like?**

I would have voted for the first

Iraq War. I voted against it because I was afraid that George Bush the father was going to behave the way George Bush the son behaved. Now I regret the first Iraq War as a very successful and appropriate use of American power.

**What about a piece of legislation you had in your grasp but couldn't close the deal on?**

Funding the affordable-housing trust fund for low-income rental housing and passing a law banning discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender. Those are the two big ones that got away from me.

**You and Jim Riddy just got married. The next step is usually having kids. So?**

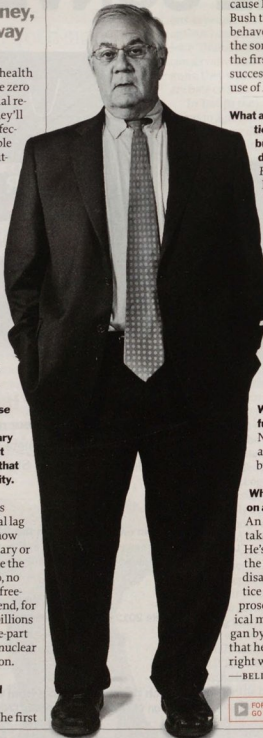
**Well? Any kids in your future?**

No. But now that you ask, it's none of your business.

**What do you give Obama on a scale of 1 to 10?**

An 8. I think the one mistake... well, two things. He's been slow to reduce the military. And I've been disappointed that his Justice Department has been prosecuting people for medical marijuana. Also, he began by being too optimistic that he could work with the right wing. So I'd make it a 9.

—BELINDA LUSCOMBE



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